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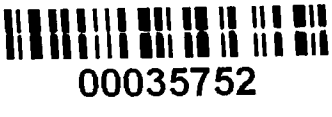

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THE HISTORY
OF
TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

VOL. I.

1856–1865

HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM THE CONCLUSION OF THE GREAT WAR OF 1815 TO 1858.

By SIR SPENCER WALPOLE, K.C.B.

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OF

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

BY

SIR SPENCER WALPOLE, K.C.B.

AUTHOR OF

'A HISTORY OF ENGLAND FROM THE CONCLUSION OF THE GREAT WAR IN 1815'

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PREFACE

NEARLY twenty years have passed since I published the concluding volumes of a work, in which I endeavoured to trace the History, and to describe the progress, of this country from the conclusion of the Great War in 1815 to the end of the Indian Mutiny. I did not think it possible to carry the narrative further at that time. The events were too recent to fall into the perspective which History requires. The chief actors in the drama, moreover, were either still living, or had been removed only recently from the stage; and the Historian shrinks from analysing the character and conduct of men, who are still alive, or who have only lately passed away.

The lapse of time has removed these difficulties. The men, who made the chief mark on History from 1857 to 1880, are no longer with us; the events, in which they played a part, are no longer the heated subjects of present controversy. The time has consequently arrived when it ought to be as possible to write the History of England from 1857 to 1880 as it was twenty years ago, to bring down the narrative of that History to 1856 or 1857.

In resuming my task, however, it seemed to me, for many reasons, preferable to write a new book, instead

of continuing an old one. The annals of this country, from 1815 to the Crimean War, are interesting chiefly from a domestic standpoint. They relate its gradual recovery from the effects of protracted war, and the emancipation of its people and its trade from the melancholy legislation of previous generations. But the annals of this country from the outbreak of the Crimean War to 1880 are of a quite different character. Except during one brief interval of legislative activity, no great domestic reforms, no great organic changes, illustrated this period of our history. But, if there was little in the conduct of Home affairs, to attract attention, the Foreign Office was abnormally active. For these were the days in which Italy gained her independence; in which Austria was extruded from Germany; in which the United States commenced and concluded the great struggle which has consolidated her territory and increased her power; in which Germany succeeded to, and France descended from, the first place among nations on the continent of Europe. These great events, which have profoundly affected British interests and British policy, force the Historian of England to enlarge his canvas. The space, which it became consequently necessary to devote to the affairs of other nations, suggested a change in the title of this book; and, instead of describing it as a History of England, I have called it 'The History of Twenty-five Years.'

In carrying out the task—which has occupied the bulk of my time during the last five years—I have endeavoured not merely to compose a narrative, which anyone may read, but to compile a work which the student may consult. I have been consequently at

special pains, in giving the facts, to cite the authorities on which the facts are stated. I have not allowed myself to be diverted from doing so by the knowledge, which experience has given me, that this course facilitates or even suggests one kind of easy criticism. For the author, who cites no authorities, cannot be proved to have neglected any source of information. While the writer, who quotes the book or paper on which his narrative is based, is always liable to the reproach that he has overlooked some work which does not find mention in his footnotes.

In quoting the authorities, on which my narrative is based, I have followed some simple rules: (i) I have uniformly given preference to the authority, to which the ordinary student can most easily obtain access; (ii) when the authorities are agreed, I have not thought it necessary to quote more than one of them; (iii) when the authorities differ, I have tried to point out the differences, or to supply the machinery for testing them; (iv) I have frequently given references which may enable the student to follow up inquiries on matters which could not be dealt with in these pages; (v) in dealing with the History of England, or with English policy, I have based my narrative exclusively on original authorities. In dealing with the affairs of other nations —so long as they do not affect British policy—I have contented myself with citing the best secondhand authorities.

So far as I am able to judge, most of the material, which is likely to be available for British History in the period, with which these two volumes are concerned, is already accessible. It is not probable that much

which is wholly new remains unavailable. The biography, indeed, which throws fresh light on the career of a great statesman was only given to the world while these volumes were passing through the press. But, through the courtesy of Mr. John Morley, I had access to the chapters, with which this book is concerned, at a much earlier period; and I was therefore able, before I sent these pages to the printer, to correct my narrative by the new light which Mr. Morley has thrown on the political history of the time.

S. WALPOLE.

HARTFIELD GROVE: *January* 1904.

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THE

HISTORY OF TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.

CHAPTER I.

ENGLAND IN 1856.

THE map of Europe, after the conclusion of the Peace of Paris in 1856, bears a striking resemblance to the same map after the Treaties of Paris in 1815. The boundaries of the great continental nations remained practically unaltered. Germany still included a Confederation of little States. Italy was still a geographical expression. In the north-west, indeed, Belgium had been separated from the Kingdom of the Netherlands; in the south-east, Greece had been rescued from Turkish oppression; in the east, the small Republic of Cracow had been absorbed by an adjacent Empire. But, in other respects, little had been changed. Even the frontier of Russia, which had been advanced in 1829, had been set back in 1856; and the map which Pitt had desired should be rolled up after Austerlitz would have rendered useful service if it had been unrolled fifty years afterwards.

Europe in 1815 and 1856.

If, however, the student will turn over the pages of his historical atlas, and divert his attention from the map of Europe to the map of the world, he will find himself contemplating change instead of in the presence

The world in 1815 and 1856.

CHAP. I. 1856.

of stability. In 1815 many portions of the earth's surface were still unknown. In the larger part of Africa civilised man had not penetrated beyond the coasts; the shape of Australia was still undetermined, its interior was unexplored. Great districts of Northern and Southern America, of Northern and Central Asia, were as inaccessible as the poles. In 1856, on the contrary, the blank spaces on the map of 1815 were becoming known. The shape of Australia was no longer imperfectly defined; its interior was slowly revealing its secrets. The western shores of the North American continent were explored, and in some places occupied. The forests of Africa were being gradually penetrated. The great islands of the Indian Ocean were becoming accessible. The interior of Asia alone remained as little known as in the days of the Roman Empire.

If in 1815 vast tracts of the world's surface remained unknown, other tracts, almost as vast, remained the heritage of the Latin races. Much of the rich territory which the United States now possess on the Pacific, and the whole of Central America, acknowledged the supremacy of Spain. All that was known of South America, except some comparatively small colonies on the north-east, was divided between Spain and Portugal. In 1856 all this was changed. The Latin races had almost completely retired as governing powers from the American continent. The mighty empire of Spain—on which, as the proud boast ran, the sun never set—was represented by some islands in the western and eastern hemispheres: the mere flotsam and jetsam, if the phrase be permissible, of a great dominion.

The retreat of the Latin races after 1815.

The retreat of Spain and Portugal did not result in the intrusion of any other European Power into the American continent. President Monroe, with

Mr. Canning's knowledge, or rather at his instigation,[1] was making it plain that the United States would not tolerate European intervention in the western hemisphere; and the American colonies of Spain remained autonomous republics; the great Portuguese colony of Brazil an independent empire.

The dissolution of the great colonial empires of Spain and Portugal constituted the chief change on the world's surface which was effected between 1815 and 1856. In the same period another branch of the Latin race was advancing in Africa. The conquest of Algeria occupied the French for nearly twenty years; but it formed the most important acquisition which they had made since the days of the great Napoleon.

The advance of Russia.

The three countries of the world, however, which, from 1815 to 1856, were most rapidly appropriating fresh territory were Russia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. The acquisitions of Russia in Asia were, indeed, almost unnoticed at the time at which they were made. The diplomatists of Europe, busily watching Russia's progress towards Constantinople, had little leisure to study her expansion in Asia. Yet the Russians were slowly pressing down the eastern shores of the Black Sea, and acquiring continually greater predominance on the Caspian. Nor was this all. The very treaty which set back their boundary in Europe stimulated their activity in the steppes of Asia and on the shores of the Pacific. In the one case they were already encamped on the Syr Daria; in the other they were about to obtain from the Chinese the cession of the territory on the left bank of the Amur.

'These conquests,' wrote the highest authority on the subject, 'form the greatest continuous extent of territory by land which the world has ever seen. No other European power in any age has, or could have

[1] *The Cambridge Modern History*, vol. vii. p. 369.

CHAP. I. 1856.

The expansion of the Anglo-Saxon race.

had, such a continuous dominion, because no other European power ever had the unknown barbarian world lying in the same way at its side.'[1] Yet, in the period in which Russia was striding across Asia, two other nations, sprung from other ancestry, and akin to one another, were making still more remarkable progress, and were destined to share between them that great continent of North America, which apparently will exert a constantly increasing influence on the industry and history of mankind.

At the commencement of the nineteenth century the United States of America were confined to the territory belonging to the thirteen colonies which had revolted from British rule. It was only in 1804 that the purchase of Louisiana from France—to whom it had been ceded by Spain—opened up a prospect of almost indefinite expansion to the young republic:[2] an expansion which was accentuated by the annexation of Texas in 1845 and the conquest of Mexico in 1848.[3] It was the Louisiana purchase and the Mexican war which made the States the rival of the Chinese Empire in size, and which promise to make them, in the near future, the rival of the Russian Empire in population. Even, however, before these great acquisitions raised the United States to a leading position among the nations of the world, the predominance of the Anglo-Saxon race on the American continent was assured. Perhaps, indeed, those who believe that it is the mission or the burden of this great family to occupy the waste places of the earth, and to bestow the blessings

[1] Freeman, *Historical Geography of Europe*, vol. i. p. 539.

[2] 'The United States are now a power of the first rank,' said Mr. Livingstone when the sale was completed. See Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. v. p. 239.

[3] Perhaps I ought to add the cession of Florida and its shadowy claims by Spain in 1819 (*Hist. of England*, vol. v. p. 338). But I am anxious to emphasise the two great acquisitions which raised the United States from a comparatively small to a gigantic power.

of good government on the inferior races of mankind, may think that there are few happier circumstances in history than that Columbus should have been seeking the back door of the Indies when he knocked at the front door of America. For, had he taken a more northern course, and shortened by doing so his memorable voyage, Cortez and Pizarro might have followed in his footsteps and inflicted the evils of Spanish rule on the States where the Anglo-Saxon race has thriven and multiplied. Happily the Spaniards, occupied in a search for gold in the tropics, left the more temperate regions in the north open to British, French, and Dutch settlers, and the stone which the builders refused became the head stone of the corner.

The United States.

Much of the vast territory which we now know as the United States was in 1856 unexplored and undeveloped. In the north-west the Missouri was still the practical boundary of civilisation. Chicago, founded only in 1831, and incorporated only in 1837, was still in its infancy. But the population of the States was, almost everywhere, increasing with a speed which has no parallel in the history of the world. There were probably only 4,000,000 people in the States in the days of Washington;[1] there were some 8,000,000 or 9,000,000 in 1815; there were some 30,000,000 in 1856. 'In the West,' said Everett, 'what is a wilderness to-day is a settled neighbourhood to-morrow.'[2] The words of Burke were still true: 'Your children do not grow faster from infancy to manhood than they spread from families to communities, and from villages to nations.'[3]

Yet, within the bounds of this great republic, there were in 1856 two nations with different interests, with

[1] Burke, in his great speech in 1775, estimated the population at 2,500,000. *Burke's Works*, vol. iii. p. 35.

[2] Rhodes, *Hist. of the United States*, vol. iii. p. 4.

[3] *Burke's Works*, vol. iii. p. 36.

CHAP. I. 1856. Slavery.

different ideas, with different tendencies. In the Southern States, where a hot and enervating climate made it difficult or impossible for the white man to labour, the soil was tilled, the crops were gathered, by the forced labour of negro slaves. In the Northern States, on the contrary, where more temperate conditions encouraged the white man to settle and work, slave labour was, at once, illegal and unpopular. Though North and South were sprung from the same ancestry, the conscience of the one approved what the conscience of the other condemned. The North declared that slavery was hateful in the sight of God, and obnoxious to the best interests of man. The South replied that the Old Testament showed that slavery was God's own institution, and that in the New Testament St. Paul himself gave up Onesimus, a fugitive slave, to Philemon. The most prominent man in the Southern States declared in 1859 that there was not 'probably an intelligent mind among our own citizens who doubts either the moral or the legal right of the institution of African slavery.'[1] Verily the consciences of the same race may be strangely affected by the fact that they dwell either to the north or the south of the 36th parallel.[2]

It will be the object of another chapter to relate the consequences of this radical difference of opinion between North and South. Here it may be sufficient to point out that the South was already representing the past, the North the future, of American history. The North was growing faster than the South, and, with the increase of population, power was passing slowly but surely into its hands. The immigrants who were constantly arriving from Europe in increasing numbers naturally preferred a home in those Northern

[1] Jefferson Davis. See Rhodes, *Hist. of the United States*, vol. ii. p. 372.

[2] Latitude 36° 30′ was the limit which the Missouri Compromise assigned in 1820 to freedom on one side and slavery on the other.

States where white men could work and live, and where labour was dear, to residence in the South, where tropical heat interfered with white labour, and where slavery reduced the wage rate to a low level. The immigrant brought to the North the intelligence which the white man everywhere displays, and which is quickened by the necessities arising from new conditions. The negro gave wealth to the slave-owning South, but he conferred no other benefit upon it. While industry and invention were endowing the North with the reaper, the sewing machine, and other labour-saving appliances, the South invented nothing, changed nothing. Its whole energies were concentrated on producing as much cotton and as much tobacco as could be extorted from the labour of a negro slave.

The isolation of the States.

Separated from Europe by 3,000 miles of ocean, the thoughts, the habits, the growth of the American people were only imperfectly understood by European statesmen. Steam, indeed, had already bridged the Atlantic. But the comparatively small vessels which crossed the ocean had neither the speed nor the comfort to attract any large number of passengers.[1] More rapid means of communication there were none. The first abortive attempt to lay an electric cable under the Atlantic had not been made in 1856, and the two great English-speaking countries, therefore, had not been brought into that close touch and communication which, forty years later on, was to do so much to cement their friendship.

[1] From 1850 a keen competition took place between the Cunard and the Collins lines of steamers. The Collins line was supported by large subsidies from Congress, and in 1854 one of its vessels reached New York in nine days and seventeen hours after she had left Liverpool. A few months afterwards another vessel of the same line was sunk in a collision, and two years later still a third vessel sailed from Liverpool and was never heard of. These accidents were attributed to the excessive speed at which the vessels were driven, and Congress withdrew the subsidy. Rhodes, *Hist. of the United States*, vol. iii. pp. 9–12. Thenceforward for many years the trans-oceanic traffic remained in British hands.

CHAP. I. 1856.

The distance which separated the United States from England was in one sense an advantage to the States. Secure from invasion, and with little interest in European politics, the Government had no occasion to maintain the costly armaments which were consuming the industries of other nations. If 1860 may be taken as a convenient year for comparison,[1] the 29,000,000 people of the United Kingdom raised a revenue of 70,000,000*l.*; the 30,000,000 people of the United States were content with a revenue of less than 12,000,000*l.* The wars of previous generations had saddled the older country with a debt of 800,000,000*l.* The younger people had a debt of only 14,000,000*l.* The trade of the older country was naturally greater than that of a younger people scattered over a vast dominion. But, in one important respect, the trade of the United States was the rival of our own. Her mercantile marine competed with the sailors of England in every port. The two Anglo-Saxon countries had in their hands the bulk of the carrying trade of the world, and, though the balance still inclined in favour of Great Britain, the scales were nearly even.[2]

The expansion of Great Britain.

With the other English-speaking country we must tarry a little longer in these introductory remarks. The British Empire in 1815 comprised all the rudiments of its future growth. It had vast possessions in all four quarters of the globe. In area, its colonies in

[1] Convenient because it immediately precedes the great American Civil War.

[2] American writers now, and American statesmen in 1860, claimed that their mercantile marine was already larger than that of Great Britain. And, if the tonnage on the great lakes is included, the claim is justified. For in 1860, while the United Kingdom had an estimated tonnage of 4,660,000 tons, the United States marine had a tonnage of 5,350,000 tons. It seems, however, hardly reasonable to include the tonnage of the great lakes in the comparison. It is due to America, however, to recollect that she had the fastest ocean-going steamer afloat, the Baltic, and the fastest yacht afloat, the America. At least, I believe that the America still maintained the superiority which she had established in 1851.

North America and Australia far exceeded all others. But even statesmen and statisticians did not recognise the extent and resources of the territories which were, directly or indirectly, under the control of the British Crown, and at the disposal of the British people. In a parliamentary return, published in 1863, the whole area of the British colonies is placed at only 3,356,000 square miles; their whole white population at a little more than 5,000,000 people. Canada, whose area is now computed at almost exactly the mileage which in 1863 was assigned to the whole colonial empire of Britain, is credited in the return with only 512,000 square miles of territory; and Australasia, which at the end of the nineteenth century contained nearly 5,000,000 inhabitants, in 1863 did not support 1,250,000 white people.[1]

In fact, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, the vast wealth which lay undeveloped in North-western America and Australasia was unknown and unsuspected. Even so lately as 1858 the British public was assured that the greater part of the territory belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company consisted of primitive rock, alternating with deep swamps, which, as the rock was too hard to decompose, seemed condemned to perpetual sterility.[2] This was the language which could be applied to a territory which some forty years later was regarded as the future granary of the world. The vast possessions in Northern America, the equally great inheritance of Australasia, were waste and unoccupied territories which it was the

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1863, vol. xxxviii. p. 1. The small area of Canada was partly accounted for by the fact that the vast regions of the Hudson's Bay Territory were not included in the dominions of the Queen. Mr. Greg, in an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, computed the area of the British colonies in 1851 at 3,834,000 square miles. The article is republished in Greg's *Essays on Political and Social Science*, vol. ii. p. 219.

[2] See *Times* of the 22nd of July, 1858, and cf. a speech of Lord Palmerston's in *Hansard*, vol. cxlviii. p. 1277.

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work of later generations to occupy and cultivate. In Australia, before 1856, the discovery of gold had given an impulse to immigration. In Canada the population had already risen in that year to some two millions and a half. But its people only multiplied at a slightly higher rate than that with which statesmen were familiar in the Old World, and showed no tendency to advance by the rapid strides which, in the United States, had exceeded all recorded experience. The warmer climate of the States offered greater attractions to the emigrant than the colder climate of the colony. The open harbours of the States afforded greater facilities to the merchant than the ice-bound approaches of Canada. The sunny South will always, in the first instance, beat the sluggish North in the struggle for power and wealth. But the hardships which the North endures may, in the course of successive generations, infuse qualities into her offspring which the children of the South may not inherit. For it is not in the cradle of ease but in the struggle with difficulty that the dominating races of mankind are nurtured. It is not by merely availing themselves of the opportunities which Nature offers, but by triumphing over the obstacles which she presents, that nations, like men, rise to fame and fortune.

These reflections, however, would have occurred to no one in 1856. The rapid growth of the States, the slower growth of Canada, apparently pointed to other issues, and people speculated on the possible absorption of the colony in the republic. This result seemed the more probable because in matters of trade the two countries were arriving at an understanding, and a treaty of reciprocity between them had been concluded in 1854. It seemed natural to infer that commercial agreement might ultimately pave the way for political union, and that the two great English-speaking com-

munities of the western hemisphere might be drawn into closer relations with each other. CHAP. I. 1856.

If the work of Britain in America and Australia had been to occupy and replenish the waste places on the world's surface, the British had been engaged in another struggle in Africa and Asia. In Africa the boundaries of their dominion had been gradually pushed forward, and the territory under British rule had been practically doubled. In Asia still greater changes had occurred. Lord Hastings had added to the Company's dominions territories in Central and Northern India as large as those over which Warren Hastings had ruled.[1] During the period of his governorship, moreover, the whole of Ceylon was made a British colony, and the British hold on the East was further strengthened by the occupation of Singapore. Lord Amherst gave us the Tenasserim coast and an entrance to Burma; Lord Ellenborough, Scindh; Lord Dalhousie, Oudh, the Punjab, Berar, Nagpore, and Lower Burma. These successive additions to the East India Company's dominions placed practically the whole of India under British rule. The independent states which still remained existed only on the sufferance of the Company.

It is a broad but sufficiently accurate generalisation, therefore, to say that the great changes which had taken place in the map of the world from 1815 to 1856 had been (1st) the retreat of Spain and Portugal, and (2nd) the advance of Russia, of Great Britain, and of the United States. But it must not be supposed that the continuous expansion of the British Empire roused any general enthusiasm among British people or British statesmen. The responsibilities of rule were much clearer than its advantages. British statesmen had not forgotten the disastrous events which had deprived us of our original American colonies, and led to the

The increase of the British Empire disapproved by statesmen and opinion.

[1] *Hist. of England*, vol. vi. p. 123.

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formation of the United States. The youngest member of the Cabinet was old enough to remember that Canada, twenty years before, had been on the brink of rebellion, and probably held the current opinion that the growth of the colony would lead either to its independence or to its absorption in the neighbouring republic. Our rule, both at the Cape and in New Zealand, was chiefly associated with a series of troublesome wars, which brought little credit to our arms, and imposed many burdens on the taxpayer, while in 1857 a mutiny of the sepoy army was about to impose a new strain on the resources of the country, and to threaten the permanence of British rule in India. In these circumstances a general impression was created that the circumference of the Empire was too large for its centre, and that it was wiser to abstain from adding to our responsibilities than to go on increasing them. Such opinions were not new in the history of the nation. The Duke of Grafton was the colleague of Lord Chatham, the first and greatest of the Imperialists, if a nineteenth-century phrase may be applied to an eighteenth-century statesman. Yet the Duke wrote:

'I cannot bring myself fairly to rejoice when I hear the account of a splendid victory [in India] gained over some country power, which probably might have become by good management an ally, because it brings to my thoughts all the evils which, I conceive, India has brought to this country.'[1]

Twenty years before the Duke recorded this opinion[2] Parliament itself had formally declared that the present schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India are 'measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and policy of the nation.'[3] A few years later Arthur Young,

[1] Anson's *Duke of Grafton*, p. 169.

[2] The Duke's Autobiography was completed in 1805.

[3] 24 Geo. III. cap. 25; *Hist. of England*, vol. vi. p. 74.

whose judgment was usually as acute as his observation was penetrating, declared that 'all transmarine or distant dominions are sources of weakness, and that to renounce them would be wisdom.'[1] Fifty-seven years after the Act of 1784, Sir Robert Peel,[2] perhaps the most sagacious minister of the nineteenth century, regarded the connection with Canada in much the same light as that in which the Duke of Grafton had viewed the conquest of India. In the peroration to a great speech on colonial policy, which he made in 1850, Lord John Russell distinctly contemplated that the time might come when the colonies would claim and the mother country would concede their independence.[3] Mr. Disraeli, writing in 1852, told Lord Malmesbury that 'these wretched colonies will all be independent in a few years, and are a millstone round our necks.'[4] The Duke of Newcastle declared that he should see a dissolution of the bond between the mother country and Canada with the greatest pleasure.[5] Sir Henry Taylor, whose reputation as a poet must not be allowed to obscure the fact that he was a distinguished officer of the Colonial Office, wrote: 'As to the American provinces, I have long held, and have often expressed, the opinion that they are a sort of *damnosa hereditas*.'[6]

[1] *Travels in France*, 2nd edition, p. 262.

[2] 'Let us keep Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, for their geographical position makes their sea coast of great importance to us. But the connection with the Canadas, *against their will*, nay, without the cordial co-operation of the predominant party in Canada, is a very onerous one. If the people are not cordially with us, why should we contract the tremendous obligation of having to defend, *on a point of honour*, their territory against American aggression? If they are not with us, or if they will not cordially support those measures which we consider necessary for their good government and for the maintenance of a safe connection with them, let us have a friendly separation while there is yet time.' Peel's *Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 389.

[3] *Hansard*, vol. cviii. p. 567; and cf. Lord Elgin's criticism of the peroration in Waldron's *Life of Lord Elgin*, pp. 115–120.

[4] *Autobiography of an Ex-Minister*, p. 260.

[5] Brande's *Lord Beaconsfield*, p. 329.

[6] Sir H. Taylor's *Autobiography*, vol. ii. p. 234.

CHAP. I. 1856. Even the late Lord Grey, who understood the colonies much more thoroughly than most English statesmen, thought that few persons would dissent from the opinion that it would be far better if British territory in South Africa had been confined to Cape Town and to Simon's Bay.[1] Sir W. Molesworth, who enjoys the distinction that he was almost alone among British statesmen in recognising the advantages of Australia and Canada, and in predicting that if they were endowed with autonomy they would become important constituents in a united empire, was opposed to all territorial expansion in Africa, and even doubted the advantage of retaining the Cape.[2] A younger statesman, who in later years was to become Prime Minister, said in Parliament that 'it might be fairly questioned whether it had been wise originally to colonise [the Cape and New Zealand], and whether, looking back on all the results, we had been repaid for the great cost and anxiety which they had entailed.'[3] Sir G. C. Lewis, in his great work on the government of dependencies, summed up the advantages and disadvantages of empire in words[4] which deprived Imperial rule of even the barren attribute of glory. In 1864, Parliament itself, under the guidance of Lord Palmerston, voluntarily surrendered the Ionian Islands to Greece.[5] In 1850

[1] Lord Grey's *Colonial Policy*, vol. ii. p. 248.

[2] *Life of Sir W. Molesworth*, ch. xiv., and cf. p. 311 *seq.*

[3] Lord R. Cecil in House of Commons, *Hansard*, vol. clxi. p. 1414.

[4] 'If a country possesses a dependency from which it derives no public revenue, no military or naval strength, no commercial advantages, or facilities for emigration, which it would not equally enjoy though the dependency were independent; and if, moreover, the dependency suffers the evils which (as we shall show hereafter) are the almost inevitable consequences of its political condition, such a possession cannot justly be called glorious.' *Government of Dependencies*, p. 233. Sir G. Lewis said in Parliament, in 1862, 'I, for one, can only say that I look forward without apprehension—and, I may add, without regret—to the time when Canada might become an independent state.' *Hansard*, vol. clxviii. p. 860.

[5] The Ionian Islands were placed 'under the exclusive protectorate of Great Britain' in 1815, and for forty-eight years were administered by a succession of English governors.

the Privy Council, in reluctantly sanctioning the annexation of the Orange River Sovereignty, declared that, 'we cannot pass from this part of the subject

Their rule conferred some material benefits on the people, but did not reconcile the inhabitants to British government. Greek in origin and language, they desired union with Greece; and, as the years rolled on, their desire increased in intensity. Early in 1849 an outbreak in Cephalonia was suppressed with perhaps unnecessary severity by Sir Henry Ward; and, in 1857, Sir John Young, who had succeeded Sir Henry, frankly avowed that England was in a false position, and that, retaining Corfu and Paxo, she should surrender the other islands to Greece. The publication of this despatch created a fresh ferment. It not only encouraged the philhellenic party in the islands, but it drove the people of Corfu and Paxo angrily to protest against the assumption that they desired incorporation with Great Britain. It was at this juncture that Sir E. Lytton Bulwer, succeeding for a few months to the Colonial Office, entrusted Mr. Gladstone with a mission to the islands. Mr. Gladstone went with the object of strengthening the connection of the islands with this country. He found that he was received by the people as the cultivated exponent of that very philhellenism which was agitating the islands. His mission, so far from fulfilling its real object, only increased the desire for incorporation in Greece. The islanders rejected the reforms he offered, and set themselves again to demand the union which he refused. Sir Henry Storks, who, on Mr. Gladstone's return to England, was entrusted with the government of the islands, found it necessary to prorogue the Parliament; and Mr. Gladstone himself, in a speech in the House of Commons in 1861, declared that England could not abandon her protectorate without the consent of Europe, and that it would be nothing less than a crime against the safety of Europe if England were to do so. *Hansard*, vol. clxii. p. 1688.

The end, however, was coming very near. In 1862, the year after Mr. Gladstone's speech, King Otho (of Bavaria) was forced to abdicate the Greek throne; a desire was everywhere expressed in Greece that Prince Alfred, the Queen's second son, should be chosen as his successor, and that opportunity should be taken of the choice to carry out the union of the Ionian islands with Greece. The invitation to the Prince was ultimately refused. But Lord Russell, at the end of 1862, told our Minister at Athens that if Greece succeeded in maintaining constitutional government at home, and refrained from aggression abroad, her Majesty would consent to a union of the islands with the kingdom; and, on the Greeks ultimately selecting Prince William of Denmark as their sovereign, the transfer was actually made. It was formally announced at the close of the Session of 1863. *Hansard*, vol. clxxii. p. 1491. But debates had already occurred on the subject (see *ibid.*, vol. clxxi. p. 1719), and were resumed in the following year (*vide e.g.* vol. clxxiv. p. 344). The cession was carried out with the consent of the powers who had signed the treaties of 1815, and with the formal assent of the islanders themselves. See also *Parl. Papers*, 1863, vol. xxxviii. p. 141. The correspondence respecting the cession is reprinted in *State Papers*, vol. liv. p. 34 *seq.*; the treaty of the 14th of November, 1863, in *ibid.*, vol. liii. p. 19. There is an admirable chapter in Mr. Morley's *Life of Gladstone* on Mr. Gladstone's mission. See book iv. ch. x.; and cf. Sir Henry Elliot's privately printed *Diplomatic Recollections*, pp. 155–233.

CHAP. I. 1856. without submitting for your Majesty's consideration our opinion that very serious dangers are inseparable from the recent, and still more from any future, extension of your Majesty's possessions in Southern Africa. . . . Unless some decisive method can be taken to prevent further advances in the same direction, it will be impossible to assign any limit to the growth of these unprofitable acquisitions. . . . In humbly advising that the Orange River Sovereignty should be added to the dominions of your Majesty's Crown, we think ourselves bound therefore to qualify that recommendation by the further advice that all officers who represent, or who may hereafter represent, your Majesty in Southern Africa, should be interdicted, in terms as explicit as can be employed, and under sanctions as grave as can be devised, from making any addition, whether permanent or provisional, of any territory however small to the existing dominions of your Majesty in the African continent, and from doing any act, or using any language, conveying, or which could reasonably be construed to convey, any promise or pledge of that nature.'[1] In 1862 the Government formally declined to entertain the offer of the sovereignty of the Fiji Islands, which had been made to it in 1859;[2] while finally, in 1865, a strong committee of the House of Commons reported that all further extension of territory (in West Africa) was inexpedient, and that it was desirable ultimately to withdraw from the whole country except probably Sierra Leone, adding that the policy of non-extension admitted of no exception as regards new settlements.[3] These views were shared by

[1] The minute of the Privy Council will be found in the *Life of Sir H. Smith*, vol. ii. p. 237, note.

[2] The sovereignty was assumed in 1874.

[3] *Parl. Papers*, 1865, vol. v. p. 1. The Committee, which made Mr. Adderley (Lord Norton) its chairman, comprised among its members Mr. Cardwell, Lord Stanley, Lord Hartington, Mr. Chichester Fortescue, Mr. Seymour Fitzgerald, Sir F. Baring, Mr. Buxton, Mr. William Forster, and Sir William

men of thought and men of action on the Continent. In the eighteenth century, for example, Voltaire considered that the loss of Canada by France was no real loss. Canada, so he argued, had cost a great deal more than she had returned. If a tenth of the wealth which had been absorbed by the colony had been employed in fertilising the uncultivated lands of France, the profit would have been much greater.[1] In the nineteenth century Prince Bismarck came to a similar conclusion. 'I do not want,' so he said in 1870, 'any colonies at all. Their only use is to provide sinecures. That is all England gets out of her colonies, and Spain too.'[2] The views of Voltaire and Prince Bismarck were shared by less prominent persons. So lately as

Gregory. It specifically recommended that Macarthy Island on the Gambia should be abandoned, and that the Government of all the Settlements should be centralised in Sierra Leone. In accordance with these recommendations, Mr. Cardwell, speaking as Colonial Secretary in 1866, said that orders had been given for the abandonment of Macarthy Island; that the Governor of Sierra Leone had been appointed Governor of the Lower Settlements, and had received instructions for the reduction of the establishment at Lagos. *Hansard*, vol. clxxxi. p. 195. It is interesting to note that Macarthy Island, whose abandonment was thus officially ordered, still remains an integral part of our territory on the Gambia; and that Lagos, which had been occupied only in 1861, and whose establishment was selected for reduction in 1866, has now a separate governor, a separate revenue, and a separate expenditure.

In the text I have purposely quoted only responsible statesmen. Men out of office wrote and spoke even more strongly. Mr. Cobden, for instance, said in 1857, 'I never could feel any enthusiasm for the reform of our Indian Government, for I failed to satisfy myself that it was possible to rule that vast empire with advantage to its people or ourselves. I now regard the task as utterly hopeless.' Morley's *Cobden*, vol. ii. p. 213. So different a man as Mr. Greville, writing about the same time, said, 'I have long expected that the day would come when we should find reason for regretting our expansive policy [in India].' And again, 'I always tremble for the consequences of our excesses [in China], that we should be induced or compelled into further extensions of our empire in the Far East.' *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. i. pp. 114, 117. For some further dicta of the same kind, see *Imperium et Libertas*, by B. Holland, pp. 111, 112.

[1] *Siècle de Louis XIV.*, vol. iv. p. 330.

[2] Busch's *Bismarck*, vol. i. p. 552. Bentham had formed precisely the same opinion. He regarded colonies as an 'aimless burden,' and he exhorted the French to emancipate them. In the same spirit, he protested against Pitt's policy of appropriating useless and expensive colonies instead of driving 'at the heart of the monster.' See Leslie Stephen, *The English Utilitarians*, vol. i. p. 198.

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'1867, when the guarantee of the Canadian Railway was proposed in Parliament, Mr. Cave, the member for Barnstaple, remarked that, instead of giving 3,000,000 sterling with a view of separating Canada from the United States, it would be more sensible and more patriotic to give 10,000,000 in order to unite them.' Thirty years later such a remark would have been denounced as treachery: in 1867 it did not elicit a single protest.[1]

It is fair to add that, even before the middle of the century, a few Englishmen had already formed a different opinion of the value of British colonies. Sir W. Molesworth had made himself conspicuous by dilating on the importance of autonomous colonies; and, in his famous Canadian Report, to which Mr. Wakefield was said to have supplied the thought and Mr. Charles Buller the style, Lord Durham had applied the principles which Sir W. Molesworth had already advanced in the House of Commons. But even Sir W. Molesworth confined these views to the great autonomous colonies in Australia and Canada, and was as much opposed as Lord Grey to expansion in Africa. It was the misfortune, too, of the country that three of these men—the pioneers of colonial autonomy—should have been prematurely cut off in the prime of life. Lord Durham died in 1840; Mr. Charles Buller in 1848; Sir W. Molesworth in 1856; Mr. Wakefield, who alone approached the allotted threescore years and ten, in 1862; and, though in one sense their work was done, or the foundations of it well and truly laid, no one remained to carry it on with the same energy on the same lines.

The few Englishmen, moreover, who were familiar with the public accounts could not help observing that, whatever advantages the colonies might confer, it was

[1] Morley's *Miscellanies*, vol. iii. p. 293. Mr. Cave's speech is in *Hansard*, vol. clxxxvi. p. 748.

certain that they threw the disadvantage of heavy expenditure on the mother country. In the return which has already been quoted, the total Imperial expenditure on the colonies is placed at more than 3,500,000*l.*, or at 1*l.* for every square mile of territory. Much of this expenditure was, no doubt, incurred in places like Malta or Gibraltar, where garrisons were maintained. But Canada cost 430,000*l.*, Australia 270,000*l.*, the Cape 500,000*l.* In the 'sixties expenditure of this kind was not regarded with the complacency with which it was met thirty years afterwards.[1] In 1867, indeed, Mr. Lowe—repeating in the House evidence which he had previously given in a Select Committee—said, 'In the time of the American Revolution the colonies separated from England because she insisted on taxing them. What I apprehend as likely to happen now is, that England will separate from her colonies because they insist on taxing her.'[2]

The reasons for this disapproval.

The doubts which in consequence had arisen on the advantages, and even on the permanence of empire, were partly due to the altered relations between the mother country and the colonies. Under the old commercial system the colonies had been treated as the appanage of the mother country, and had been forced to buy what they wanted in the markets of the United Kingdom. But, under the new system of free trade, the colonies were enabled to buy and sell in any convenient market.[3] A theory, indeed, had already been originated which later on was to find expression in the aphorism, 'Trade follows the flag;' and the utility of

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1863, vol. xxxviii. p. 1. Mr. Adderley (Lord Norton) said in Parliament that, in New Zealand alone, this country maintained an army of 7,000 men; the cost of this force (at 100*l.* a man) could not have been less than 700,000*l.*, and a public man in New Zealand actually estimated the whole cost of the colony to the mother country at 1,500,000*l.* *Hansard*, vol. clxv. pp. 1442–3.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. clxxxvi. p. 762.

[3] I have discussed this point in *Hist. of England*, vol. vi. p. 327 *seq.* See also Lewis's *Government of Dependencies*, pp. 214–224.

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British colonies was in some places defended on this ground. But the aphorism is precisely one of those telling phrases which it is not very difficult to coin, but whose truth it is not very easy to prove; and in 1856 its accuracy would not have been accepted by any competent authority.[1]

In 1856, too, the ordinary Englishman was not so satisfied, as his successor became at the end of the nineteenth century, that the British race had a special capacity for the government of dependencies. His rule in India seemed chiefly associated with wars which he did not approve, and with mutiny which was straining the resources of the Empire. Canada was connected in his mind with discontent and rebellion. The Cape and New Zealand recalled to his recollection a series of troublesome and provoking wars with native races. The expedient of autonomous institutions in Australia was still on its trial; and the gift of freedom to slaves in the West Indies had not succeeded in converting any one of these islands into a Utopia. And the Englishman who honestly examines the state of British dependencies at the commencement of the twentieth century may, perhaps, have reason to think that a preceding generation had more cause than he is now ready to acknowledge for its hesitation and its doubts. Wherever, indeed, England has been able to give autonomous institutions to men of European extraction, her sway has been attended with results which, on the whole, have been both beneficent and advantageous. It is impossible, again, to avoid the conclusion that her rule in India has conferred almost unmixed benefits on the teeming millions of that great peninsula. Where, again, her flag has been raised on those points of the world's sur-

[1] See Mr. Lucas's observations in Appendix iii. to Lewis's *Government of Dependencies*. For the whole subject of colonial trade the reader cannot do better than consult Merivale, *Colonisation and Colonies*, Lectures vii. and viii.

face, like Hong Kong, Colombo, or Singapore, which have become the centres of a concentrated trade, or indispensable links in the commerce of the world, the wealth which has followed the enterprise of her merchants has brought a large measure of prosperity. But those who have read Mr. Froude's works or Miss Kingsley's reflections—those who have some knowledge of the state of the West Indies to-day, or of the Ionian Islands forty years ago—may perhaps be forgiven for doubting whether the ordinary Crown colony is much better governed by the Colonial Office than the French colony is governed by France.[1] Perhaps, indeed, the reader of such books as these may be puzzled to discover why the same rule which has secured such beneficent results in the East Indies should have been attended with so many failures in the West Indies. It is hardly reasonable to suppose that all the ruling capacity of the British race should have been concentrated in the India Office in St. James's Park, and that none of it should have been available for the Colonial Office in Downing Street. And possibly the true explanation may be found in the fact that India is large, and that the West Indies are relatively small. The size of India has attracted to its shores a Civil Service which has made India the home of its working life. The man who goes to India in his youth to take up the work of administration, and who continues there till age necessitates his retirement, is identified with the land in which the most important period of his life is passed. His career is in India; his prospects of promotion are in India; he has no hope or ambition

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[1] In a very interesting report by Mr. Austin on colonial administration, which has just (1903) been published by the Government of the United States, the author (p. 2617 *seq.*) carefully examines the systems in force in the British and French West Indies. The value of the report to an English reader is that it represents the conclusions of a neutral writer.

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outside India; he becomes acquainted with the character, the feelings, and the wishes of the people around him; and, if he is a good man, his whole energies are directed to promoting their welfare. The handful of Englishmen, on the contrary, who are selected for the higher posts of government in our Crown colonies, from the very nature of their appointments, can hardly identify themselves with the people with whom they live. Those who have been engaged in the practical work of government in a dependency would probably share the author's view that a period of five years—usually the extreme limit for which a governor holds office—is too short a time to enable a man to ascertain what is wanted and to carry out his conclusions. But, even in those five years, the governor of a Crown colony is necessarily thinking not only of the people among whom he is living, but of the promotion that is before him. He cannot, like the Indian official, throw his whole heart into work in which he is engaged to-day, but from which he will certainly be removed to-morrow. He cannot be expected to feel, as the best Indian officials have shown that they have felt, that the touching words of Ruth are applicable to him also: 'Thy people are my people.'

The defects of colonial administration.

It is fair, too, to recollect that in the early days of colonial government many things were done which it is impossible to excuse. The whole of the mineral rights in Cape Breton were given to the Duke of York. Vast tracts of territory in Canada were reserved for the Church. Even so lately as 1849 the whole soil of Vancouver's Island was granted to the Hudson's Bay Company.[1] Perhaps, however, the history of Prince

[1] Fortunately, in making this grant, the Government reserved the right of resumption (*Hansard*, vol. cli. p. 1097), and, as a matter of fact, the proprietorship was resumed by the Crown. Under the Company the island had made no progress. See the Duke of Newcastle in *Hansard*, vol. clxxii. p. 48.

Edward Island affords a more instructive example of the methods in which in the old days this country dealt with its colonies. In 1767[1] nearly the whole of the land in the island—1,340,000 out of 1,500,000 acres—was disposed of in a public lottery in London in sixty-seven lots of 20,000 acres each. It was made a condition that each of the fortunate persons who acquired these lots should introduce one settler, and that they should pay a quit rent, varying from 2*s.* to 6*s.*, for each 100 acres. No steps, however, were taken to see that these conditions were fulfilled. Settlers were not introduced; the Government at first tacitly, and ultimately in express words, acquiesced in their non-introduction; the claim for quit rent was not enforced; its arrears were remitted and its amount reduced. Thus almost the whole soil of the colony was alienated to proprietors who were chiefly absentees, and who from the nature of their tenure were necessarily placed in a position of antagonism to the *bona-fide* settlers. The history of the island became the record of one long quarrel between the proprietary thus imposed by the Imperial Government upon the colony and the population who were their tenants; and this quarrel was aggravated when representative institutions were granted to the island in 1851. The government of the colony was thenceforward in the hands of men who had little or no sympathy with absentee landlords. In 1855 the matter was brought to a crisis. The local government sent home two Acts, one imposing a rate or duty on the rent rolls of the proprietors for military expenses, and for the encouragement of education, the other giving compensation to tenants for improvements. The Imperial Government thought these Acts so bad in principle, and so defective in machinery, that it took the

[1] Prince Edward Island was finally acquired by this country in 1763 at the peace of Paris.

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unusual course of disallowing them both, and of intimating to the governor of the colony its intention to 'resist all measures of a similar character which were aimed at the spoliation of the proprietors.' The Government, however, which arrived at this decision felt that it was dangerous to postpone all remedy, and suggested that 'an amicable settlement might be effected by the lands being bought up.' The suggestion was adopted by the colony, and in April 1856 the colonial legislature agreed in proposing a loan of 100,000*l.* to buy up the lands, and asked the Imperial Government to assist them by guaranteeing the loan. The Colonial Office assented to this course; and in 1858 Lord Stanley, speaking as Secretary of State, asked the House of Commons to authorise him to carry out an arrangement which had been agreed to by his predecessor.[1] The legislative mill, however, occasionally grinds only slowly; and it was not till 1875 that the remedy which had been proposed nearly twenty years before was finally adopted.

British statesmen in 1856.

When such things were possible in colonial administration, it was certainly open to reasonable men to doubt whether the possession of colonies by the mother country either brought advantage to the colonies or added to the strength of the Empire; and the doubts which were felt on the subject were perhaps the more intense because the men who governed England in 1856 were for the most part old, and, steeped in the opinions and traditions of a previous age, were incapable of appreciating the new forces which were slowly building up the British Empire. Lord Palmerston, who was Prime Minister, and Lord John Russell, Lord Aberdeen, and Lord Derby, the only other men alive who had filled the first place in any Ministry, had

[1] I have given this story almost in the words in which Lord Stanley related it to the House of Commons. *Hansard*, vol. cl. p. 309.

all been born in the eighteenth century. Three of them had commenced their parliamentary career before the battle of Waterloo; three of them had sat in the Cabinet which had carried the first Reform Act; all of them must have vividly remembered the incidents of the great struggle which had closed in 1815; tradition and habit had concentrated their gaze on Europe and the East; and they hardly turned their eyes to that great and undeveloped West, where a new Anglo-Saxon dominion, in M. de Tocqueville's striking phrase, was growing up unnoticed;[1] and with its growth was shifting the balance of the world. Years before, indeed, a contemporary of their own, with a half glimpse at the real truth, had made the somewhat egotistical boast that he had called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old. But nothing was more certain than that the New World which Mr. Canning thought he had called into existence had redressed no balance which was worth redressing. With his eyes, like those of Columbus, intent on the tropics, and on the ruins of a mighty empire, Mr. Canning, like the great navigator, had neglected the vigorous republic in the northern continent. Neither he nor his successors realised that it was the growth of Anglo-Saxon power in the north, and not the destruction of Latin rule in the south, which was ultimately to redress the balance of the world.

If, however, the statesmen of 1856, nurtured in the traditions of a previous generation, paid too much heed to the lessons of the past, and gave too little attention to the forces which were to control the future, they might be excused for failing to foresee the causes which would ultimately bring the United States and Great Britain into closer alliance. For in the eighty years which preceded 1856 the relations between the mother

[1] De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, vol. i. p. 445.

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country and her former colonies had been frequently strained; and in 1856 an unfortunate quarrel, arising out of the Crimean War,[1] had led to the dismissal of our Minister from Washington, and had produced

[1] During the Crimean War the Government decided on enlisting the services of a Foreign Legion, and they opened an office at Halifax in Nova Scotia, where they offered considerable attractions for recruits. They at the same time endeavoured to induce English, Scotch, and German settlers in the States to proceed to Nova Scotia and enlist. There was no question that persons, so enlisted in United States territory, would have been guilty of an offence against municipal law. But the British Government seems to have concluded that, as the enlistment was not completed till after the arrival of the recruits in Nova Scotia, the letter of the law would not be broken. Mr. Crampton, who was our Minister at Washington, strove, in the first instance, to steer a straight course in a very difficult voyage. But some of his agents were not animated by similar scruples, and issued proclamations to the unemployed, and did other things which it is very difficult to justify. The United States Government ultimately prosecuted Hertz, one of these agents (who was afterwards admitted by our Attorney-General to be a man of no character), and Hertz, on his conviction, made a confession which directly implicated Mr. Crampton. Upon the strength of the verdict and the confession, the United States Government sent Mr. Crampton his passports. The British Ministry, happily, did not find it necessary to retaliate, and Mr. Dallas, the Minister of the United States, remained in this country. *State Papers*, vol. xlvii. pp. 358 *seq.*; and Rhodes's *Hist. of the United States*, vol. ii. pp. 186–188. There is a debate on the subject in *Hansard* (vol. cxliii. pp. 14, 120), where the British case is very temperately stated by the Attorney-General (Sir A. Cockburn) (p. 40), and the case against it by Sir F. Thesiger (p. 54). For the general apprehensions of war which these unfortunate events excited see, *inter alia*, *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. pp. 48, 49. Oddly enough, the feeling in America was intensified by the fact that an American, who was stated to have been an attaché to the American Embassy, was turned back from her Majesty's Levée because he insisted on his right to pass the Queen in a frock coat and black neckcloth. 'For anything I know,' wrote Lord Campbell, 'this may be construed into a *casus belli*.' *Life of Campbell*, vol. ii. p. 345. It is pleasant for an Englishman to acknowledge that the strained relations between the two countries were ultimately made easier by an act of courtesy on the part of the United States Government. One of our ships, the Resolute, sent to the Arctic regions in 1852 to ascertain if any traces could be discovered of Sir John Franklin's expedition, was abandoned by her captain and crew, and later in the year picked up as a derelict by Captain Boddington, the commander of an American whaler. Our Admiralty waived any claim on the vessel, and placed her at Captain Boddington's disposal. By a unanimous vote, however, Congress decided on purchasing the vessel from Captain Boddington, on refitting her, and on presenting her to the Queen. On the 12th of December, 1856, the Resolute arrived at Spithead, under the charge of Captain Hartstein, of the United States Navy, and the Queen, with her usual good sense and good taste, went on board the vessel herself and formally received it. The facts will be found clearly stated in *Hansard*, vol. cxliv. p. 1948. Cf. *Parl. Papers*, 1857–58, vol. lx. pp. 23–32.

serious apprehensions of warfare between the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race. With this quarrel before them, and the recollection of previous differences with difficulty healed, British statesmen might be forgiven for failing to perceive that a common ancestry and a common language would ultimately draw two great kindred races together, and that the United States was a country whose friendship would ultimately be prized in England beyond that of any other nation in the world.

Their failure to appreciate the trend of history.

If, however, British statesmen and the British people in 1856 failed to appreciate at its true worth the value of a great colonial empire, or the rapid expansion of a greater English-speaking republic, they were equally blind to the new forces which were slowly growing up in Europe. Lord Palmerston, to the end of his life, remained strangely ignorant of the causes which were drawing the German people together, and was equally uninformed of the circumstances which were making the Prussian army the most efficient military machine in the world.[1] Prussia,

[1] In the closing days of 1864 Lord Palmerston wrote to Lord John Russell: 'The Prussians are brave and make good soldiers; but all military men who have seen the Prussian army at its annual reviews of late years have unequivocally declared their opinion that the French would walk over it, and get without difficulty to Berlin, so old-fashioned is it in organisation and formation and manœuvre.' *Life of Lord John Russell*, vol. ii. p. 401, note. This amazing opinion, it should be recollected, was expressed only thirty months before Sadowa. In Lord Palmerston's excuse it may be stated that the French, who were much more deeply interested, were equally blind to the truth. M. Rothan says: 'L'Empereur s'inclinait devant l'opinion de ses généraux les plus expérimentés, qui, frappés de la valeureuse résistance qu'ils avaient rencontrée dans la campagne improvisée de 1859, proclamaient la supériorité incontestable des armées autrichiennes sur l'armée prussienne, laquelle, disaient-ils, manquaient de consistance.' And again: 'Le général Devaux, un de nos officiers supérieurs les plus renommés pour la sûreté de ses appréciations, était revenu d'une mission en Allemagne, convaincu que l'armée prussienne serait battu haut la main par l'armée autrichienne.' Rothan, *La Politique Française en* 1866, pp. 59, 60, note. Mr. Herbert Paul has lately reminded us that two such different men as Lord Cowley and Mr. Matthew Arnold were under the same delusion. *Life of Matthew Arnold*, pp. 57, 58. The same view will be found expressed by M.

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in his judgment, was a *quantité négligeable*; and its troops were unequal to the task of meeting the trained battalions of Austria, or the vast military array of France. No doubt it was difficult for a man who was old enough to recollect what France had done under the First Napoleon to estimate accurately her position under the Third. She still retained the immense advantage which her situation, her resources, and the thrift and spirit of her people conferred upon her. Her Emperor was supposed to have 550,000 armed soldiers at his disposal;[1] and in 1856 such a force seemed large enough to carry out the projects of the highest ambition. Her ruler, in alliance with this country, had just brought the Crimean War to a successful conclusion; and—whatever other lessons might be drawn from the struggle—it was certain that Russia was, for the moment, exhausted by serious losses in men and treasure. Every Englishman who went to the Continent, moreover—and the invention of steam and the development of railways were multiplying the opportunities for travel—returned impressed with the many proofs which came before him of the prosperity and wealth of the French people. At every town in which he stayed, in almost every village through which he passed, something was being done for its embellishment or its convenience,[2] by the erection of some new

The position of France.

Guizot in Senior's *Conversations*. But, of course, in 1866 M. Guizot had no special means of information. The ignorance, both in France and England, of the real truth is the more amazing because military men in other countries had a much clearer perception. General La Marmora, as far back as 1861, recognised 'la grande valeur intrinsique de l'armée Prussienne,' and in 1864 affirmed its superiority in 'beaucoup de choses' to that of France. La Marmora, *Un peu plus de Lumière*, pp. 31, 38.

[1] See, *inter alia*, a paper on the 'Second French Empire' in Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. i. p. 139.

[2] In 1863 Napoleon asked for a credit of 1,000,000*l.* to be expended on *rural* roads, declaring, in a letter to his Minister, that the improvement of rural was of more importance than the reconstruction of urban France. De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iv. p. 129.

church, by the repair of some old building, or by the promotion of some other work for the use or amusement of its people. Paris, in particular, was being rapidly converted into a city of palaces; and the Londoner who went to Paris, and who saw new boulevards, new public buildings, new opera houses, in process of formation and erection, and who returned home to his own dingy streets, which had practically been unimproved for more than forty years, indulged in the common reflection that some things were done better in France than in England, and concluded that the French were a great, wealthy, and advancing people.

It is the business of statesmen to examine the growth and power of nations with an attention which ordinary travellers are not expected to bestow; and perhaps, if British statesmen in 1856 had been able to divest themselves of the traditions in which they had been trained, or of the recollections of their youth, they might have formed very different conclusions, and adopted a very different policy from that which was pursued by Lord Palmerston and his colleagues; for anyone who had taken the trouble to look below the surface of the stream might possibly, even in 1856, have found some reasons for doubting whether France was holding her own among the nations of the world.

The slow growth of her people.

There was one thing in which France was being steadily overtaken by other nations in the race for superiority. She was not multiplying her numbers in the same ratio as the Germans, the Russians, and the English. It is a broad but sufficiently accurate generalisation to say that, from 1815 to 1856, France added 20 per cent. and the United Kingdom 50 per cent. to the number of its people. And this difference was the more striking because, while in the interval the United Kingdom had sent out its surplus millions to spread her blood, her

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language, her ideas in the western and southern hemispheres, France had despatched few emigrants from her shores, and had imported men and women of alien races to do the work which the failure of her own children has left to other hands to do. The slower growth of the French people was no new fact in history. In the early years of the eighteenth century France had three inhabitants for every one inhabitant in Great Britain ; [1] at the end of the eighteenth century she had two people alive for every person living in the United Kingdom ; at the conclusion of the nineteenth century the United Kingdom had outstripped her in the race, and had the larger population of the two countries.

The increase of the French debt.

If the growth of population was steadily increasing the relative weight of the United Kingdom compared with the weight of France, France was also being slowly deprived of another advantage. During the first half of the nineteenth century she enjoyed comparative immunity from the crushing debt which was paralysing the efforts of her rival. It could not be said of her, as it was said of England, that she was bound over in 800,000,000*l.* to keep the peace. When she entered the Crimean War her debt was not much more than one-third of our own. The cost of the war to France closely corresponded with its cost to Great Britain. But while in this country the chief part of the cost was paid out of taxation, in France nearly the whole cost was paid out of borrowed money.[2] At the close of the Crimean War, indeed, the debt of Great

[1] Voltaire has noticed in the *Siècle de Louis XIV.*, vol. ii. p. 195, that 'L'Angleterre, proprement dite, n'est que le tiers de la France et qu'elle n'avait pas la moitié tant d'argent monnayé.'

[2] It is not very easy to estimate how far the Crimean War was paid for by borrowing, and how far out of revenue. Sir G. C. Lewis, in his Budget speech of 1857, said that the expenditure of the three years of war had exceeded the expenditure of the three preceding years of peace by rather more than 76,000,000*l.*, and he gave this sum as the cost of the war. He further went on to show that the revenue of the three years of war had exceeded the revenue of the

Britain was still more than twice as large as the debt of France; but the disproportion was rapidly diminishing. During the ten years which preceded 1870—years which, so far as Europe was concerned, were years of peace for France—the debt of France rose from 386,000,000*l.* to 515,000,000*l.* During the same ten years the debt of this country decreased from 808,000,000*l.* to 798,000,000*l.* The great catastrophe of 1870 turned in a moment a balance which was being slowly shifted; but it was already obvious that, if the financial policy of the two countries remained unchanged, and both of them remained at peace, the debt of France, instead of being smaller, would be ultimately larger than our own.

The colonies of France.

There was a third respect in which Great Britain was slowly obtaining an advantage over her rival. Much as her statesmen disliked the policy of expansion, there was very little doubt that the vast possessions of this country were not imposing any strain on her finances which she was unable to bear. Her great dependency in India had always paid its way, and her autonomous possessions in America and Australasia promised to be, and ultimately became, self-supporting. But France had never succeeded in making Algeria

three preceding years of peace by 40,000,000*l.*, and he placed this sum as the proceeds of the additional war taxation. From this reasoning it would be fair to say that, while the country paid 40,000,000*l.* of the cost of the war out of taxation, she paid the other 36,000,000*l.* out of borrowed money. See *Hansard*, vol. cxliv. p. 639. I have, *infra*, p. 70, given my reasons for placing the amount at rather under 33,000,000*l.* Mr. Sydney Buxton, following Mr. Chisholm, *Report on Public Income and Expenditure*, 1869, p. 708, places the cost of the war at 70,000,000*l.*, of which he computes that 38,000,000*l.* were provided out of taxation, and only 32,000,000*l.* out of debt. *Mr. Gladstone, A Study*, p. 21. In France the cost of the war is placed by M. Leroy-Beaulieu (*Traité de la Science des Finances*, vol. ii. p. 366) at 1,638,000,000 francs, and he says that 1,538,000,000 francs was borrowed, and only 100,000,000 francs paid out of revenue. M. de la Gorce (*Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. i. pp. 334, 411) mentions three loans, amounting in the aggregate to 1,500,000 francs, raised for the war. Mr. Mulhall declares that the debt raised by France for the Crimean War amounted to 93,000,000*l.* Cf. *Life of Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 358.

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financially independent. It was at once too far from, and too near to, her own shores for the purpose: too near to France to be governed autocratically as England governs India, or to be trusted with the independent autonomy which she concedes to Australia; too far to be incorporated completely in the Republic or in the Empire. The fact that she had to control in Algeria a warlike and frequently hostile race compelled her to hold the country by a strong military force. As she had no surplus population, no considerable number of emigrants occupied the available land of the colony; and the men who went to Algeria were either the soldiers who formed the garrison, the functionaries who carried on the government, or financiers who saw some opening for profitable speculation. All of these classes had much more interest in drawing on the resources of France than in making Algeria either politically or financially independent. In the middle of the nineteenth century, indeed, government in Algeria had not assumed the form which it bore before the twentieth century began. The necessities of the colony had compelled the French to appoint a Governor-General, who was originally a dictator; the desire to assimilate the institutions of Algeria to those of France had led to its division in 1858 into three departments, each with a separate administration, with a prefect at its head. The appointment of these prefects weakened the authority of the Governor-General, without superseding the necessity for a strong central authority. The Governor-General became 'a costly and useless decoration;'[1] and the real control was transferred to Paris. In Paris, however, nothing was known of the necessities of the colony. Railways were sanctioned which had no

[1] 'Un décor coûteux autant qu'inutile.' *Le Gouvernement de l'Algérie*, par Jules Ferry.

raison d'être but the port which they served; the port was created for the railway which was brought to it.[1] The indigenous inhabitants were oppressed with regulations which, however suitable they might have been for France, were unsuited to Algeria, and the French were burdened with a weight which seemed intolerable. In 1864 it was stated in the French Chamber that Algeria had cost 120,000,000*l.* and 150,000 lives.[2]

The contrast between French and British development.

To these considerations it may be added that even the appearances of wealth, which met the eye of the traveller at every turn, were to some extent deceptive. France was like a rich woman who was spending an undue proportion of her income in decking her person; England like her more prudent sister, who was grudging expenditure on jewels and dress, and devoting her resources to the development of her estate. In the middle of the nineteenth century (1852) France had 1,863 miles of railway;[3] in the same year the United Kingdom had 6,621 miles.[4] At the end of 1856 the mileage of railways in France had risen to 4,000,[5] the mileage of railways in the United Kingdom to 8,707. And it must be recollected that, though the railways of the United Kingdom stood, compared with the railways

[1] *Le Gouvernement de l'Algérie*, p. 27.

[2] *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. i. p. 564.

[3] 3,000 kilomètres. De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. ii. p. 10.

[4] Statistical abstract.

[5] 6,500 kilomètres. De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. ii. p. 12. The considerable extension of French railways after 1852 had been the fruit of a very singular arrangement. Concessions had been granted freely to little companies to make new lines, and these concessions had been almost invariably sold to the great companies at a considerable premium. Thus, says M. Ollivier, the concession for a line from Graissessac to Béziers had been sold for four million francs before an inch of earth had been moved. The concession for a Grand Central Railway was sold for 149 millions. This policy vested the railway system of France in six great companies, and these companies, having acquired their monopolies at an exorbitant price, proved unable, after the crisis of 1858, to fulfil their obligations, and the State was compelled to come to their assistance. *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 260. It is easy to point out many extravagances in our own system; but the extravagance in France, though it took its own shape, was equally marked.

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of France, as 9 stands to 4, its area, compared with that of France, stood as 3 stands to 5, its population as 3 stands to 4. The genius of one people was producing palaces and boulevards, and embellishing their cities with statues and gardens; the genius of the other people was winning coal and iron from the bosom of the earth and covering the land with a network of railways.

The reader must not attach too much force to the foregoing considerations. It would be a grave error to sum up the capacities of a nation as a merchant tests the value of his business, by a mere estimate of its assets and its liabilities. But, on the other hand, the statesman who neglects this part of the subject ignores one of the main factors which must determine the future balance of the world. The statesman, however, of 1856 might fairly have replied that his business was with the France of his own day and not with the France of an unknown future; and that he could not refuse to grapple with the problems of the time because the trend of events might be slowly modifying the conditions on which their solution would be determined. He could not forget that both at the end of the seventeenth century and at the end of the eighteenth century France had been the power which had practically forced Europe into war; that on each occasion the ambitious policy of her rulers had disturbed or destroyed the balance of power; that she still retained her old advantages; that, by a strange concurrence of events, she had freed herself from the bonds imposed on her in 1815; that a Napoleon sat again on the Imperial throne; that the tardy birth of an heir had given the French a new interest in his dynasty and a new pledge of its permanence; that the promise of the reign, 'L'Empire c'est la paix,' had been destroyed within two years of

French ambition and British apprehension.

its birth by the outbreak of the Crimean War; that the experiences of that war had strengthened the strength and repaired the defects of the French army; that the French Emperor now stood at the head of a force which apparently had no equal in Europe; and that the autocratic master of 550,000 men, with his head apparently full of the traditions of the Old Empire, and of schemes for the reconstruction of modern Europe, could hardly be expected to refrain from the temptation of using his power. A British statesman might also recollect that, though France was happily our ally, though her sovereign and our Queen were paying and returning one another's visits, the Emperor had not only a cause to assert, but a defeat to avenge; and that his armaments, both by sea and by land, proved that he was preparing the power which would enable him, should the opportunity arise, to strike a blow at this country.

The Franco-English alliance.

These considerations, which had affected public opinion in England in 1852, and which were to move it still more strenuously in 1860, were to some extent erroneous. The Emperor, no doubt, was not oblivious of the traditions and of the disasters of the First Empire; but, on a calm review of the politics of Europe, he had made up his mind that the friendship of England was of paramount importance; and to this friendship he clung from the beginning to the end of his reign. True, there were ever floating in his brain ideas which were opposed to the settlement of 1815. He wished to reconstruct the map of Europe, and in reconstructing it to do something for those nationalities which the great war had done so much to repress. Poland, Italy, Roumania, the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, these countries were associated with aspirations which he wished to encourage. He did not despair that even England, which had done so much for Belgium and

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If Napoleon was strangely blind to the consequences of his own policy, the British public and British statesmen were equally ignorant of the new forces which were growing up among them, and which were to dominate the earth. The growth of the Anglo-Saxon race was the great fact in the history of the world, and men like Lord Palmerston and his colleagues had no leisure to examine the rise of the great transatlantic republic, or the expansion of the British Empire. The growth of British colonies and of British India was the

great fact in the history of England; and statesmen on both sides of the House of Commons regarded our external possessions as a burden which had to be borne, and not as a benefit to be prized. The aspirations of the Teutonic race were the strongest force in Europe, and Lord Palmerston was regarding with ill-concealed contempt the country which was to unite all Germany under one flag for one cause.

This ignorance, or this lack of foresight, was common both to the people generally and to the statesmen who should have been their guides. But, in dealing with questions of foreign policy, the people and their leaders were animated by different views. The statesmen had grown up in the belief that it was the business of diplomacy to interfere in the affairs of other countries; and Lord Palmerston was always ready, when any country was either divided against itself or at issue with its neighbours, to proffer his advice, whether it was asked for or not. In consequence, there was hardly anything which went on in Europe in which the British Foreign Office did not attempt to interfere. But the people were already doubting the policy of this constant intervention in disputes which did not affect their interests, and in questions which did not concern them. Though Mr. Cobden and the Manchester school of politicians had temporarily lost their influence, the policy of non-intervention, which they had preached in season and out of season, had sunk into the hearts of the nation. The people were more and more anxious that other nations should be left to manage their own concerns in their own way, and that even British interests should only be enforced when they were seriously imperilled. They objected to the employment of diplomatic machinery and of the British fleet to recover every debt of 20*l.*[1]

The growth of the policy of non-intervention.

[1] See the phrase assigned to a British diplomatist in the *Life of Lord John Russell*, vol. ii. p. 56.

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The belief in free trade, and disbelief in protection.

If the principles of the Manchester school, so far as foreign politics were concerned, were slowly sinking into the conscience of the nation, the doctrines of free trade were almost universally accepted in political circles. The Conservative party, which had fought the battle of protection, was hopelessly discredited. Tried by the test of experience, the Conservatives had proved themselves wrong. They had denounced the great Reform Act as a revolutionary measure, which would involve the destruction of property and the overthrow of institutions; and property was just as safe, the Crown and the House of Lords just as strong, in the fifties as in the thirties; they had denounced the repeal of the corn laws as ruinous to agriculture, and in 1856 the agricultural interest was enjoying an undoubted prosperity. They had denounced the repeal of the Navigation Acts as ruinous to British commerce; and the carrying trade of the country was increasing as it had never increased before.[1] They had declared that the withdrawal of protection, the cheapening of food, and the shortening of the hours of labour would lead to a fall in wages; and the working classes were more fully employed and more highly paid than at any previous period.[2] The Conservative party had, in fact, neglected

[1] Sir G. C. Lewis, in introducing the Budget of 1857, said: In order to comfort those gentlemen who some two (*sic*) years ago anticipated the ruin of the shipping of this country from the alteration then effected in the navigation laws, I will read to them returns of the tonnage of vessels in cargo, entered and cleared in each of the three years 1853, 1855, and 1856. They are as follows:

—	British Tons.	Foreign Tons.	Total.
1853	9,064,000	6,816,000	15,880,000
1855	9,211,000	6,156,000	15,367,000
1856	10,971,000	6,933,000	17,904,000

(*Hansard*, vol. cxliv. p. 638). Mr. Disraeli, in his Budget speech of 1858, confessed the same thing. 'In 1855 British tonnage amounted to 9,000,000 tons, and foreign to 6,000,000 tons. In 1857 British tonnage had risen to 11,600,000 tons, and foreign to 7,400,000 tons.' *Ibid.*, vol. cxlix. p. 1269.

[2] The *Times* wrote on the 31st of December, 1859: 'It may be doubted whether greater accumulations of wealth have ever taken place in a period of ten years in any age or country; and for the first time within recent experience the reward of labour has increased more largely than the profits of capital. An unprecedented duration

the safe rule never to prophesy unless you know. They had predicted revolution and ruin, and they found themselves inconveniently confronted with prosperity in agriculture and commerce, and stability in politics. The great success of Sir Robert Peel's legislation was, indeed, inducing people to believe that they had found out a new panacea for every domestic difficulty. The policy of *laisser-faire, laisser-passer*, which a French merchant had impressed on Colbert in the seventeenth century,[1] and which Adam Smith had explained in three volumes in the eighteenth century, seemed certain to regulate, for all time, the government of England. The maximum of liberty for the individual, the minimum of interference by the State, were the expedients by which wealth could be multiplied and happiness secured. The chief work of the Legislature in the future, so it appeared, would be the removal of restrictions and not the imposition of regulations. The victory of free trade was so complete that Lord Brougham was able to say, 'We have lived to see the day when a real genuine uncompromising protectionist could only find his proper place in one of our museums, among the relics of the ancient world or the specimens of extinct animals.'[2]

The causes of the approaching reaction against these ideas.

Yet, at the very time at which Lord Brougham was speaking, a keen intelligence might probably have discovered grounds for disbelieving in the permanence of the current views on foreign and domestic politics.[3] In the first place, though the creed was accepted, its

of agricultural prosperity has led to a general advance of wages in the country; and in every branch of skilled industry able workmen find it in their power to command almost any price for their services.' In the same article it said, 'Free trade is henceforth, like parliamentary representation or ministerial responsibility, not so much a prevalent opinion as an article of national faith.'

[1] For the French merchant's happy dictum see, *inter alia*, Voltaire, *Le Siècle de Louis XIV*, vol. iii. p. 122, note.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 42.

[3] Mr. Lilly has shown that the late Mr. Justice Byles predicted reaction on almost every point. See 'A Forgotten Prophet' in the *Fortnightly Review*, January 1901.

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apostles were discredited. The men who had advocated the policy of free bread had been the men who had been foremost in denouncing the Crimean War; and in 1856 the country forgot the services which they had rendered, and only remembered the noble but unpopular efforts which they had made to preserve peace. And, in the next place, if the policy of *laisser-passer* had passed into an axiom, the policy of *laisser-faire* was proving impossible. The complex conditions of modern society, the aggregation of the working classes in factories and of the population in great towns, was demanding or even necessitating an interference in the affairs of daily life which would have been thought intolerable in a preceding century. The State was already initiating the policy which was to make the Civil Service the companion of the British citizen from his cradle to his grave. It was registering his birth; it was insisting on his vaccination; it was helping to provide him with his education; it was controlling the conditions of his labour; in the case of women and children it was prescribing the hours of their toil. If the British citizen fell ill, it was investigating the causes of his disease; and if he died, it not only prevented his burial in the old family vault, but it added a new terror to death by inquiring into the amount of his estate, and appropriating a portion of it to its own purposes. It was difficult to reconcile these and other features of modern legislation with the policy of *laisser-faire*. The statesmen of 1856, indeed, who had been parties to this legislation, would have been unanimous in disclaiming any intention to interfere with the liberty of the subject; they would have indignantly repudiated the suggestion that they were preparing a way for State socialism to walk in. But it was none the less true that they were finding it necessary to interfere with the liberty of the individual, and to

authorise the intervention of the State in the round of every man's life.

The trend of events, moreover, was in some cases falsifying the predictions of the economists. They failed either to see or to appreciate the great influence which the improvement of locomotion was exerting on the destinies of mankind. Mr. Malthus, for example, was right in concluding that, as man multiplies his kind more rapidly than the earth increases its products, the time may come when the world will be unable to support the increasing number of its people. But he failed to see that the practical significance of his demonstration was to be almost indefinitely postponed by the new facilities which were to place the productions of the great undeveloped territories of the New World at the disposal of the thickly inhabited countries of the Old.

And there was another and a deeper reason for the distrust in the economists which was about to arise. Political economy contains a profound truth—a truth which no statesman and no people can afford to neglect. But it is sometimes forgotten that it does not comprise the whole truth. Adam Smith intended that the 'Wealth of Nations' should be read with and corrected by the 'Theory of Moral Sentiments,' and it is not his fault that posterity should have fixed their attention on the first of these works and overlooked the conclusions of the second. In the middle of the nineteenth century men were discovering, or about to discover, that problems in politics are not to be solved like problems in mathematics, and that there is an element of uncertainty in the one which does not enter into the other. The philosopher in his study may find it convenient to assume that in the same circumstances men will always act in the same way; but the statesman soon learns that on similar occasions men act in different

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ways, and that the same causes may lead to opposite results. In the last ten years of the eighteenth century—to take a striking example—the course of revolutionary legislation in France and the emancipation of the Roman Catholics in Ireland led, in each case, to the multiplication of small holdings: in the one by the compulsory division of estates among the children of their proprietors, in the other by the wholesale creation of freeholds for lives. But, while the subdivision of land in France imposed a restraint on the increase of the people, in Ireland it led to a rapid growth of the population. In France, a people trained in habits of thrift found in the partition of the soil a reason for deferring their marriages, or restricting the number of their children; while in Ireland each new division of the land afforded an opportunity to the peasantry for the creation of new families and for adding to the numbers of an already teeming population.

The fact, however, that actual man will not always act as the economists find it convenient to assume that economical man will act, does not detract from the value of their teaching. It was their business to explain the rules which, on the whole, govern the conduct of mankind; and exceptions to these rules no more affect the value of their doctrine than the aberrations of a planet from its orbit destroy the authority of the first of Kepler's laws. The astronomer showed that all planets move in an ellipse: his successors have noticed aberrations from the ellipse. Yet the eccentric motions of the planet Uranus did not prove that Kepler was wrong; they only indicated that there were external influences which interfered with the exact operation of his law. Just in the same way the fact that actual man does not follow the precise course which economical man is supposed to pursue does not prove that Adam Smith and his successors were mis-

taken. It only shows that in politics, as in mechanics, it is impossible wholly to disregard the human hand and the human brain. Kepler told us how the planet moves, and his demonstration is not inaccurate because it deviates from its natural course. The economist explains what man in given circumstances will do, and the explanation is none the less true because certain men in the same circumstances do not take the course which the average man may be expected to follow.

It must also be admitted that there was something inconsistent in the principles and in the practice of some of the later economists. Some of them had adopted the doctrine, which Mr. Bentham had expounded, that all government is 'one vast evil,' only kept from mischief by minute regulations and constant vigilance. It would have been difficult to push the principle of *laisser-faire* further than this. Yet the very men who were thus denouncing the interference of the State were themselves depending on the intervention of the State to give effect to the reforms which they were advocating. They were forced to appeal to Parliament, which in their sense was the State, to remove the old restrictions which former parliaments had imposed, and to institute the new machinery which they themselves thought necessary.[1]

To these general considerations it may be added that the economists suffered from the inability of many of their students to follow their reasoning. Economical works were to many adults what Euclid is to many boys. Some boys, indeed, almost intuitively grasp the meaning of the beautiful demonstrations which Euclid has supplied; while others—perhaps most of

[1] See *The English Utilitarians*, by Sir Leslie Stephen, vol. i. p. 287, and a remarkable article on the book in *Edinburgh Review*, No. 396, pp. 401–403. The article is the work of so able and well-known a thinker that it is an instance of that rare criticism where the commentary is of equal value with the text.

CHAP. I. 1856. them—are never able to do more than learn a few of the propositions by heart. Some men, in the same way, have no difficulty in assimilating the reasoning of the older economists, while others—many others—have an inherent incapacity for either following or understanding it. Their difficulty is probably increased by the fact that the conclusions of the economist seem to them opposed to their own experience. How could an ordinary country gentleman, in the middle of the nineteenth century, who knew that all his own land was let, and that all the land in his neighbourhood was let, be expected to believe that the worst land paid no rent? He might find it difficult to answer Mr. Ricardo's reasoning, but he dismissed it as opposed to his own experience. He was very much like the teacher in Australia who taught his pupils that the world was round because it was so described in the books, but who, as he had sailed all the way from England, knew—from his own observation—that the books were wrong, and that the world was flat.

It is not surprising that men of whom the country gentleman was a type were a little impatient with the economists. The fact is that the writings of the later economists had much the same effect on their readers as, in Mr. Disraeli's delightful romance, they had on Popanilla's fellow-islanders. They were bored by reasoning which they could not answer and which they did not understand; and, just as Popanilla's compatriots settled the question by turning the philosopher out of the Isle of Fantaisie, so the contemporaries of the utilitarian school were ready to solve the difficulty by banishing political economy to the planets. It so happened, moreover, that, at the very time at which Lord Brougham was proclaiming that the victory of free trade was complete, and that other men were declaring that economists for the future would govern,

...the world, a different set of teachers were gaining the ear of the rising generation and proclaiming an opposite doctrine. For the higher literature of the middle of the nineteenth century contained a passionate protest against the doctrines of the Westminster school, and against the deductions which public men were drawing from its conclusions.

The literature of the nineteenth century.

Nothing is more difficult than to give a correct appreciation of contemporary literature. The best contemporary critics are constantly wrong. In his own interest every publisher endeavours to select the men who seem qualified by their attainments and their judgment to pronounce a useful opinion on the manuscripts submitted to him for publication. Yet the mistakes which have been, and are being, made by professional readers suggest the consideration whether the publisher would not do as well if he trusted to lot instead of to criticism. And the professional readers may at least claim that, if they err, they err with men of still greater eminence. 'Lord Macaulay was the most omnivorous reader, and one of the most acute critics, of his generation; yet Lord Macaulay, writing in 1850,[1] declared that it was 'odd that the last twenty-five years, which have witnessed the greatest progress ever made in physical science—the greatest victories ever achieved by man over matter—should have produced hardly a volume that will be remembered in 1900.' Mr. Carlyle's position in literature was almost equal to that of Lord Macaulay, and Mr. Carlyle, writing in 1865, could say of people flying off into literature, that they will 'mainly waste themselves in that inane region, fallen so inane in our mad era.'[2] In the twenty-five years which Lord

[1] Trevelyan's *Macaulay*, vol. ii. p. 254. The *Times* said in a leading article (4th of February, 1858): 'This period of literature [the period of metrical writers] ended with the first quarter of the century'—oddly enough, exactly endorsing, at any rate so far as poetry is concerned, Lord Macaulay's twenty-five years.

[2] Carlyle's *Misc. Essays*, vol. vi. p. 364.

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Macaulay thus dismissed, the world of history had been enriched by the writings of Mr. Hallam, Mr. Grote, Dean Milman, Mr. Stubbs, Dr. Arnold, Mr. Prescott, and by Lord Macaulay's own earlier volumes. Mr. Carlyle, Mr. Newman, and Mr. Ruskin had already published the books by which they will be chiefly remembered. In poetry, Mr. Tennyson had given us much of his choicest work, and was on the eve of printing 'In Memoriam.' Fiction, of which Lord Macaulay himself was so great an admirer, had produced (without reckoning Scott's later works) Mrs. Gaskell, Lord Lytton, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Peacock, the Brontë sisters, Mr. Dickens, and Mr. Thackeray. Mr. Carlyle's mad era of inane literature was adding to these great names those of George Eliot, Mr. Buckle, Mr. Froude, Mr. Matthew Arnold, and Mr. Darwin.

The revolt against the economists in literature.

It would, in one sense, be of interest to give an account of the productions of these great writers, and to attempt to estimate their position in the history of universal literature; but it is doubtful how far it is reasonable to introduce a review of literature into the history of a nation. The historian apparently ought to discriminate between the literature which merely charms the sense or satisfies the intellect, and the literature which influences thought and consequently helps to shape a nation's policy and destiny. With the first he has little or no concern; with the second he ought to be as familiar as he is with the dry bones of statistics and blue-books which it is his business to cover with the living flesh of history.

Instead, then, of attempting any elaborate review of the literature of the period, this narrative will occupy itself with the works of those writers, or, rather, with passages from their works, which affected the thought of the generation that was growing up to manhood. Four men there were in the middle of the

century whose names stand out, if not as the greatest authors, at any rate as among the greatest teachers of their time. These four men—Mr. Carlyle, Mr. Ruskin, Mr. Tennyson, and Mr. Darwin—exerted an influence on the minds of the generation in which they wrote which exceeded that of their other contemporaries. They all of them had, or fancied they had, a message to deliver; and they delivered it in accents which attracted as much as the writings of the economists repelled. And the message which these teachers delivered was in each case opposed to the teachings of the economists. 'Yea, they thought scorn of that pleasant land,' the Utopia of the economists' imagining, where a population freed from all external control were to conduct their own affairs and promote their own industries free from the interference of the State and the tax gatherer, and subject only to the eternal laws of competition and supply and demand; where each nation, bent on exchanging its own produce for that of its neighbours, was to supersede the rivalry of war by the rivalry of trade, where the lion was to lie down with the lamb, the lion's teeth having, in the first instance, been extracted by universal disarmament.

Mr. Carlyle, Mr. Ruskin, and Mr. Tennyson.

Mr. Carlyle, in point of time, was the first of these teachers. His writings are an impassioned protest against the doctrine of *laisser-faire* and *laisser-passer*. With him political economy was 'the dismal science.' 'Pig philosophy' was the term which he thought fit to apply to Mr. Cobden's teaching. 'Moral evil is unattainability of pig-wash; moral good, attainability of ditto.' That was his description of the objects of free trade. The condition of the people problem was, in his judgment, the one domestic question worth solution; and it was to be solved, not by a policy of *laisser-faire*, not by a policy of cheap bread, but by

CHAP. I. 1856. the direct interference of the State. If statesmen could not improve the condition of the lower orders, they could at least 'draw them out in line and openly shoot them with grape.'[1]

In Mr. Carlyle's judgment, the cause of the suffering condition into which the working classes had fallen was the fierce competition which was degrading the rate of wages, and he had consequently little sympathy either with the laws of supply and demand which the economists were formulating or with the great producing classes who were unconsciously carrying them out. Mr. Tennyson, whose influence was eventually to become greater than Mr. Carlyle's, had the same dislike of trade and of the men who were pursuing it.

Who but a fool would have faith in a tradesman's ware or his word?

With him the tradesman is—

> The smooth-faced, snub-nosed rogue,

or—

> The broad-brimm'd hawker of holy things,
> Whose ear is cramm'd with his cotton, and rings
> Even in dreams to the chink of his pence.

But Mr. Ruskin is the more consistent opponent of the teachings of political economy. It was natural that a man endowed with Mr. Ruskin's tastes and principles should find much to condemn in the life around him. He was seeking the beautiful, and cheap buildings and smoky factories were making life hideous. He was longing for repose, and the railroad was threading its way through secluded valleys and bringing noise where there had previously been quiet. He was searching for perfect workmanship, and the pressure of competition was flooding the world with cheap cottons, cheap houses, cheap crockery. Confronted

[1] Froude, *Carlyle's Life in London*, vol. ii. p. 337. Compare Mr. Ruskin's suggestion in *Fors Clavigera*, that we should remedy some ills 'by taking our sport in shooting babies instead of rabbits;' and see Mr. Frederic Harrison's *Ruskin*, p. 193.

with these evils, he set himself to examine the system under which they were possible. The times—so he concluded—were out of joint; and no remedy would be forthcoming 'until this disgusting nineteenth century has—I cannot say breathed, but steamed its last.'[1]

At one time Mr. Ruskin seems to have concluded that the evils which he deplored were due to the disregard of the teachings of the economists; but he soon persuaded himself that the economists themselves were responsible for the state of things which he deplored. The professors, so he thought, were ignorant of their trade,[2] and he gradually decided to devote the remainder of his life to teaching them the elementary principles of their own profession. A great strike in the building trade afforded him a text, and he took up his parable in the pages of the 'Cornhill Magazine,' which at that time was edited by Mr. Thackeray. His crude and novel ideas found at first little favour with the general public; and Mr. Thackeray, alarmed at the universal condemnation, stopped the series of articles which Mr. Ruskin was contributing. They became, however, the foundation of 'Unto this Last,' a book which Mr. Ruskin himself thought the best—that is to say, the truest—thing that he had ever written, and which a competent critic pronounced in 1895 'the most original and creative work in pure literature since "Sartor Resartus."'[3] The ideas which Mr. Ruskin thus expressed he afterwards developed in 'Fors Clavigera,' 'Time and Tide,' and other writings. In these, if he did not succeed in reconstructing a science, he showed

[1] Collingwood, *Life of John Ruskin*, vol. i. p. 126.

[2] Half in fun, half in earnest, he told Mr. Carlyle in 1855 that his studies in political economy induced him to think that nobody knows anything about it. Collingwood, *Life of John Ruskin*, vol. i. p. 194.

[3] Mr. Ruskin himself described these essays as 'the truest, rightest worded, and most serviceable things I have ever written.' Cf. Hobson's *Ruskin*, p. 42; Harrison's *Ruskin*, p. 91; and Mr. Frederic Harrison's article in the *Nineteenth Century*, October 1895, p. 574.

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himself at complete variance with all the teachers of political economy.

Mr. Ruskin's faith was so pure, his aspirations so high, and the sacrifices which he made were so great, that the critic who has a heart hesitates to condemn a teaching which the critic who has a head finds it impossible to defend. If Mr. Ruskin could have had his way, modern England would have been deprived of the advantages with which industry and invention have endowed her; and the activity of the Western world would have been replaced by the torpor of the East. This is not the place, however, seriously to consider Mr. Ruskin's dislike of machinery or his denunciation of competition, usury, and profit—to examine his argument that the rate of wages depended on custom and good feeling, and that, the final outcome of wealth being the production of human beings, no one should be allowed to marry without the permission of the State. But it may be worth while to point out that in these and other opinions Mr. Ruskin was far less accurate than the writers whom he was condemning. The economist only pretended to claim that, in the great majority of cases, men are moved by motives of self-interest. Mr. Ruskin held that, in many cases, good men were moved by affection and feeling. The economist had created the economical man, the average specimen of his race. Mr. Ruskin tried to supplant him with an ideal man, who, whatever other attributes he may have had, was not an average specimen either of his age or of any age. In truth, Mr. Ruskin's wish that men's actions should be determined on altruistic grounds could not alter the fact that, in the great majority of cases, men's actions are determined by selfish considerations. It may be a very good thing to argue that competition is a law of death, that usury is wrong, and that the rate of wages should not depend on the laws of

supply and demand; but, as a matter of fact, competition lives, interest is paid and received, and men give their workpeople the wages for which they can obtain their labour. Mr. Ruskin, in fact, mistook the whole purpose and functions of political economy. He was the preacher who tried to teach men how they should behave; while the economist was the interpreter who tried to explain how men did behave.

The theory of government inculcated by these men.

It was not, however, only on the strict conclusions of political economy that the teachers differed from the economists. They differed still more widely from the Westminster school, which comprised the chief of the economists, in the whole theory of government. With the Westminster school representative institutions were the end, their perfection the aim, of statesmanship. With Mr. Carlyle parliamentary tongue talk was the idlest waste of time that had yet been invented; the extension of the franchise was shooting Niagara; and the Legislature which gave votes to every householder should proceed to entrust them to horses.[1] Mr. Tennyson was a little more sober in his views of government than Mr. Carlyle. He saw that the Throne should be broad-based on a people's will; he wished the representatives of the people to set the bounds of freedom wider yet; but, though he could thus write of constitutional government in language which may be quoted and admired when constitutional government has ceased to be, he had no sympathy with its machinery. His candidate for parliamentary honours made the rotten hustings shake to his brazen lies to gain a wretched vote.[2]

The fact was that Mr. Tennyson and Mr. Carlyle, like Mr. Ruskin, had little sympathy with the middle classes, to whom the Reform Act of 1832 had entrusted

[1] 'Divine commandment to vote: Manhood Suffrage (Horsehood, Doghood ditto not yet treated of).' *Miscellaneous Essays*, vol. vi. p. 342.

[2] *Maud*, Part I. vi.

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the suffrage; and both thought that the ascendency of trade had been possible only through the culpable neglect of their duty by the upper classes.

> Those old pheasant lords,
> Those partridge breeders of a thousand years,
> Who had mildew'd in their thousands doing nothing
> Since Egbert.[1]

And both considered that the true remedy for this state of things lay in entrusting the power of government to some strong man.

> Ah, God! for a man with heart, head, hand,
> Like some of the simple great ones gone
> For ever and ever by,
> One still strong man in a blatant land,
> Whatever they call him, what care I?
> Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat, one
> Who can rule and dare not lie.[2]

The hero, in Mr. Carlyle's eyes, was the chief factor in every calling. His political heroes were, without exception, men associated with strong action and arbitrary government: Cromwell, not Hampden; Napoleon, not Washington.

Mr. Disraeli.

One man there was in the House of Commons who certainly at the bottom of his heart shared these opinions. Mr. Disraeli's career affords a record of inconsistencies; and, perhaps, among the many inconsistencies to which he was driven by opportunism, nothing is more remarkable than that the statesman, who played on the House of Commons as a skilful fiddler plays on his instrument, in his secret heart felt contempt for parliamentary government. The Revolution of 1688, in Mr. Disraeli's judgment, had given us a Venetian constitution, and had converted the

[1] *Aylmer's Field.* How exactly this compares with Mr. Carlyle: 'Alas, where are the Hengists and Alarics of our still-glowing, still-expanding, Europe? . . . Where are they? Preserving their game.' *Misc. Essays*, vol. vi. p. 420.

[2] *Maud.*

sovereign of England into a Venetian doge.[1] The gentlemen of England on the one hand, and the labouring classes on the other, had been swamped by the weight of the ten-pound householders; and this result, Mr. Disraeli agreed with Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Tennyson in thinking, had been largely due to the neglect of their duty by the country gentlemen. The gentlemen of England, from Mr. Disraeli's standpoint, had the opportunity of placing themselves at the head of a counter-revolution, and instead of doing so they were, like Lord Marney, pulling down their cottages, and eloquent on the many advantages which a labourer could command for himself and his family on a wage of eight shillings a week.[2]

Probably enough has now been written to show that the ideas of government which were being expressed in the highest literature differed as widely from the ideas which the reformers were advocating in the House of Commons, and the Westminster school of economists in their writings, as the political economy of Mr. Ruskin differed from the political economy of Mr. Mill. It was not only in their ideas of what a government should be that this distinction existed. They differed still more widely as to what a government should do. The economist wished that the Government should pursue a policy of economy and *laisser-faire* at home; a little weary of the burden of empire, he desired to contract his responsibilities abroad; he was in favour of pursuing a policy of non-intervention in the affairs of foreign nations; or, if he intervened at all in such matters, to exert his moral influence in favour of those nations which were struggling for the autonomous institutions which he himself enjoyed. Above all, peace—peace almost at any price—was the true interest of the British people. War, in addition to the direct evils which it inflicted

The economists and the writers contrasted.

[1] See *Sybil*, ch. iii.

[2] *Ibid.*, ch. xii.

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on humanity, was an unprofitable waste of energy. It involved the destruction instead of the accumulation of wealth.

The message which Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Tennyson were delivering was almost the exact opposite to this. With a disinclination or a dislike to much that was inseparable from parliamentary government, with a preference for the 'one strong man,' or the hero, as Mr. Carlyle would have called him, they looked forward, as Mr. Ruskin afterwards looked forward, to the increased intervention of the State;[1] and they were impressed with the external responsibilities of empire. It followed, as the corollary of these opinions, that the policy of economy and of peace at any price had no attraction for these writers. Mr. Carlyle, indeed, was indignant with the manner in which continental armies were levied and employed. But his whole teaching—his admiration of Frederick and Cromwell—inspired a trust in the strong man, who was not over-scrupulous in the shedding of human blood for a cause in which he believed. Mr. Tennyson, in 'Maud'—a poem which, it is fair to recollect, was written at a time when its author, like his fellow countrymen, was carried off his feet by the exciting thrill of a great war—goes even further:

> Why do they prate of the blessings of peace? We have made them a curse.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Is it peace or war? Better, war! loud war by land and by sea,
> War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred thrones.

In advocating war, as occasionally preferable to peace, these men had no sympathy with the desire

[1] I have desired to burden my narrative with as little detail as possible, or I ought perhaps to have added that, in this respect, Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Ruskin were just as much opposed to Mr. Herbert Spencer as in other respects they were opposed to Mr. Bentham and Mr. John S. Mill.

which Liberal politicians were feeling for redressing some of the worst evils under which oppressed races were suffering. War was to be waged in the interests of the British Empire; and subject nationalities, struggling for their independence, were no more to be considered than the despots who were oppressing them.

> Shall I weep if a Poland fall? Shall I shriek if a Hungary fail?
> Or an infant civilisation be ruled with rod or with knout?
> *I* have not made the world, and He that made it will guide.

How different from the spirit which a quarter of a century before inspired Lord Byron in the Isles of Greece, or Mr. Campbell in Navarino, or which finds expression in the famous verse:

> And Freedom shriek'd—as Kosciusko fell!

Mr. Carlyle went even farther. With him slavery was one of the last evils in the world which required a remedy.[1] Liberated slaves were among the last people who deserved consideration. The governor who broke the law to hang their leader, the officers who flogged and shot the negroes without the formality of a trial, were the heroes whom Mr. Carlyle undertook to defend in his old age. Inferior races were to be coerced into submission—legally, if possible, but, at any rate, to be coerced.

While, then, in the middle of the nineteenth century, statesmen like Lord Brougham had made up their mind that political economy, in one shape or another, must govern the world, the teachers, Mr. Carlyle, Mr. Tennyson, and Mr. Ruskin, had been or were engaged in denouncing the opinions of the economists; and while the economists, if they concerned themselves at all with affairs of other nations, gave their moral support to subject nationalities and

[1] 'To me individually the nigger's case was not the most pressing in the world, but among the least so.' *Misc. Essays*, vol. vi. p. 345.

CHAP. I. 1856. oppressed races, the greatest of the teachers were absolutely indifferent to the servitude of the negro or the subjection of the Pole.

How great was the change of thought which was thus effected will be seen if the language of the Westminster school is compared with the opinions of the teachers. With the Westminster school representative institutions were the universal panacea for misgovernment; free trade and competition for the poverty of the multitude. The country, according to the philosophers, should rigidly abstain from all intervention in the affairs of foreign nations; and reduce, as far as it was able, the unfortunate responsibilities which its external dominion involved. Taxation was to be evenly adjusted, and taxation was, above all things, to be kept low. So far from the expansion of the people being desirable, that nation was the happiest which approached most nearly the stationary state where every man and woman married, and each married couple had two, and only two, children to carry on the fortunes of the family in another generation. Mr. Tennyson's, like Mr. Carlyle's, writings contain a passionate denunciation of all these views. The rotten hustings is to be superseded by the strong man; the tradesman who, according to one school, was to regenerate the world, becomes, in the other, the broad-brimmed hawker whose ear is crammed with his cotton. War—loud war by land and sea—is preferable to the peace which competition is allowing a harried land; and, so far from a stationary state being a happy one, England's chief claim is that she has founded many a mighty state, and the poet prays that she may not fail through any craven fear of greatness. Read the writings of the Westminster school, and you will find the key to much in British history from 1830 to 1860. Read the writings of Mr. Tennyson and Mr. Carlyle, and

you will find the key to much that took place in the last forty years of the nineteenth century.

It has not perhaps been generally noticed that the arguments which Mr. Tennyson and Mr. Carlyle thus used were reinforced by the investigations of another great man working in another field. Perhaps of all the men, who influenced thought in the nineteenth century, no one made so profound an impression upon it as Mr. Darwin. The effect of his writings on the religious views of his age must be reserved for treatment in another chapter. Their effect on its politics must claim attention here. In one sense, no doubt, Mr. Darwin had no new gospel to deliver. The idea of evolution was in the air before his great work on the 'Origin of Species' made it almost universally familiar. But, until Mr. Darwin and Mr. Wallace published the results of their investigations, no intelligent explanation of the facts which had puzzled and baffled previous inquirers had been offered. Mr. Darwin provided the world of science with the key which promised to unlock the existing mystery. He gave them the working hypothesis of which they were in sore need; and, though he left much unexplained and much unaccounted for, he pointed out the way in which his followers should travel, and supplied them with new light to guide them on their journey. The majority of his unscientific readers, indeed, probably understood only imperfectly his reasoning. But there were certain conclusions which found expression in certain phrases which were readily adopted by them. Life—so they gathered from his teaching—involved one prolonged struggle for existence, in which the weaker types succumbed and the stronger or fitter types survived. The disappearance of the unfit thus became part of the universal law of nature, or, as religious people who accepted the new teaching taught, the consequence of the predetermined design of

Mr. Darwin.

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God. Evolution was the method by which the Creator himself was working towards perfection; and the disappearance of the unfit was a consummation to be desired, not a catastrophe to be feared. And this doctrine was applicable not merely to the lower forms of life, it applied to the noblest creature of all—to man himself. For man, who was but the highest type which evolution had brought about, was engaged in the same struggle for existence as other animals. It was true of him, as it was true of the prehistoric forms whose fossils could still be found in some of the earlier life-bearing rocks, that the fitter would survive; it was even the will of God that the less fit should perish. If this was the universal rule of nature, the deliberate design of God himself, what mattered it that the Maori in New Zealand or the Indian in the United States was disappearing before the advance of a higher type? What mattered it if tens of thousands of negroes perished in mid-Atlantic, if the survivors of these wretched people produced a little more sugar for superior races to consume, or a little cheaper cotton for superior races to weave into cloth? Everything—so evolution taught—was working for the ultimate improvement of the human family, and the disappearance or servitude of the inferior races was only part of the great scheme of nature which had been slowly elaborated since the creation of the world.

In this description of some of the most prominent influences which were affecting political thought in the middle of the nineteenth century, attention has been purposely concentrated on the writings of the greatest men, and the works of inferior or less influential authors have been left unnoticed. But it must be recollected that the language which Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Tennyson were using was at the time emphasised by the teachings of other writers, who were doing much to inspire the

The historians of the century.

rising generation with pride in their country's growth and confidence in their country's future. For the nineteenth century saw the production to an extraordinary degree of historical literature. History, in the modern sense of the word, was late in making its appearance on English soil. From the days of the old chroniclers to the days of Hume no Englishman had attempted to trace the story of the English race. Men like Bacon and Clarendon had, indeed, done something to illustrate particular periods of English history. Sir W. Raleigh had filled a wider canvas with an account of the history of the world. But, so lately as the middle of the eighteenth century, Voltaire remarked that it had been left to a Frenchman, M. Rapin, to write the only good History of England. The same thing could not have been said a few years afterwards, when Mr. Hume published the narrative which for a hundred years was to hold its own as the best account of the growth of modern England. In the hundred years which followed Mr. Hume his example was widely imitated. Mr. Gibbon, at the commencement of it, published the great work which alone among modern histories ranks with the masterpieces of Greece and Rome. Thenceforward more and more attention was paid to historical literature, till the reign of Victoria saw a succession of works which have given the British people an increased familiarity with their own annals and with the annals of other nations.

It is a mistake to suppose that these works were solely due to the individual tastes and pursuits of their authors. Literature, like everything else, is the creation of the age in which it is produced; and men write to satisfy the desires of those who read or to circulate the thoughts of the highest thinkers of their time. It was no mere accident that the two chief historians whom the United States have produced should have devoted

CHAP. I. 1856. their attention to the acquisition of the Spanish Empire in the New World and the collapse of the Spanish Empire in the Old. The episodes of European history which they selected for illustration were precisely those which would appeal to every cultured American who approved the Louisiana purchase and the Monroe doctrine. Again, it was no mere accident that, at a time when reform was occupying the minds of statesmen, Mr. Hallam should have related the constitutional development of England from the days of Henry VII. to the days of George III. It was obviously his intention to show that the evolution of the Constitution, which was being effected in his own time, had proceeded through the seventeenth and part of the eighteenth century, and had only been interrupted—if it were interrupted—at the period at which he drew his narrative to a close. In the same way it was no mere accident which induced Mr. Grote and Dr. Thirlwall to trace the story of Ancient Greece, or Dr. Arnold and Mr. Merivale to relate the history of Rome. They were appealing to the citizens of a mighty and a growing empire, and they wanted to hold out to their readers the examples and the warnings which could be gathered from the records of mighty empires of the ancient world.

In fact, when Lord Bolingbroke said that history was philosophy teaching by examples, he intended to enforce some such conclusion as that which has been expressed in the preceding paragraph. The numerous works which were published in the middle of the nineteenth century on our own history, or on isolated portions of the nation's story, are an attempt to supply a nation proud of its growth and its extent with a knowledge of the manner in which that empire had been acquired and maintained. Cynical critics may declare that Lord Macaulay produced a Whig tract, Mr. Froude

an apology for autocracy, Mr. Green some detached essays on English history and literature, or, to descend to a lower example, that Sir Archibald Alison published twenty volumes to prove that Providence was on the side of the Tories. But the impartial reader will admit that all these writers are inspired with the same faith in the English race, the same appreciation of England's greatness, the same belief in England's destiny. They are conscious that they are dealing with the story of a great nation, and the knowledge that they are doing so is reflected in their narratives.

Thus the historians, in their turn, were doing much to emphasise the protest which the poets and teachers were raising against the doctrine of the economists. Mr. Carlyle, Mr. Tennyson, and Mr. Ruskin were denouncing the argument that the future of the nation depended on the competition of traders. They were protesting against the doctrine that peace at any price was preferable to war; while the historians were showing that England had been built up by other methods, and that it was the mission of a great empire, in Virgil's language, to subdue the proud as well as to spare the weak. Mr. Darwin was even carrying the doctrine farther; for, without thinking of its influence on politics, he was showing that the law of nature insisted that the weak should give way to the strong, and that the heritage of the world was consequently allotted to the governing and conquering races. The writings of these men were on the table of every educated householder; they were greedily devoured by the more intellectual representatives of the rising generation; their teaching was reproduced for a less intellectual public by the daily newspapers. They were no more proclaiming the whole truth than the economists themselves; but the half truth on which they were insisting was welcome to a generation which was

CHAP. I. 1856. out of patience with the doctrine of *laisser-faire*, and which was not wholly reconciled to the new doctrine of non-intervention in Continental politics, for it taught them that their country was not merely a huge shop, but that she was also a great nation—a nation with a past to remember, and with a destiny to fulfil.

CHAPTER II.

THE FALL OF LORD PALMERSTON.

The position of Lord Palmerston in 1857.

At the commencement of the Session of 1857, Lord Palmerston had held the first place in the Administration for two years. He had been originally entrusted with power to bring the war with Russia—for which he had been so largely responsible—to a satisfactory conclusion; and, until peace was signed, it had been recognised that he should not be disturbed. The peace of Paris, however, had necessarily terminated this understanding; and in the beginning of 1857 statesmen out of office were freely speculating on the probability of a change of ministry.[1] Lord Palmerston's age alone furnished an ample basis for this speculation; for, in the middle of the nineteenth century, people had not become accustomed to octogenarian or even septuagenarian Prime Ministers. From the fall of the Duke of Newcastle in 1762 to the appointment of Lord Aberdeen in 1852, only three men, all of whom were peers,[2] who had passed the age of sixty had held the first place in any ministry, and it was almost universally concluded that a man of advanced years could not stand the double strain attaching to the rule of the Cabinet and the lead of the House of Commons. Lord Palmerston's friends

[1] The *Times* said, in its review of 1857 (1st of January, 1858): 'Statesmen out of office were sanguine in their expectation of a change of Ministry.'

[2] The Duke of Portland in his second Ministry, the Duke of Wellington in the closing months of his Ministry, and Lord Grey.

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and supporters shared this feeling. His friends thought that he was showing signs of infirmity, which justified the anxiety about him that Lady Palmerston was known to feel.[1] His supporters noticed that he was displaying some of the deficiencies of memory and temper which are the occasional accompaniments of old age. On the first night of the Session he contradicted Mr. Disraeli on a matter of fact; a week afterwards he had to explain away his contradiction; and two days later still he had to explain his explanation; and his speeches on all three occasions were thought to be marked by an 'insolence of manner'[2] which might have been justified if he had been right, but which was less excusable when he was wrong.

So far as internal politics were concerned, indeed, there was nothing looming on the immediate horizon which threatened to disturb the future of the Ministry. The demand for organic reform, which had been revived in the lean years succeeding the Irish famine, had subsided in the fatter years which had followed in the early fifties. Trade was improving, agriculture was thriving, and an improving trade and a thriving agriculture were increasing the demand for labour, and tending to raise the rate of wages. Free trade had made Great Britain a cheaper and happier country to live in; and amid their improved surroundings

[1] For Lord Palmerston's health in 1857, cf. *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. pp. 85, 86, and Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. i. p. 206.

[2] The phrase is *Greville's*, vol. ii. p. 85. Mr. Disraeli, in the debate on the Address, alleged that a secret treaty had been concluded during the Crimean War, at the instance of this country, between France and Austria, in which, in return for aid in the Crimea, France had agreed to guarantee to Austria her possessions in Italy. Lord Palmerston denied the existence of this treaty; but, on the 10th of February, he admitted that a convention to this effect had been prepared, though he alleged that it had not been signed. On the 12th he had to admit that the convention had been signed. *Hansard*, vol. cxliv. pp. 110, 164, 470, 535. Greville says of this incident: 'He [Lord Palmerston] is not *qualis erat*; and I am disposed to believe that he is about to begin breaking.' *Greville*, vol. ii. p. 86.

the people displayed no general desire for an extended suffrage. Between 1840 and 1850 the six points of the people's Charter had aroused enthusiasm among the many, and had excited alarm among the few. Between 1850 and 1860 the six points had almost passed out of the range of practical politics, and only provoked a good-humoured smile.

In external politics there was more reason for fear. The mass of the people, indeed, paid little heed to foreign policy, but the state of our relations with foreign powers was renewing the distrust which most politicians felt in the foreign policy of the Prime Minister, by reminding them of the unrest which had prevailed abroad when he had held the seals of the Foreign Office under Lord Melbourne and under Lord John Russell. A war in which this country was not entirely in the right was being conducted in Persia;[1] and a war, in which large sections of the House of Commons thought her distinctly in the wrong, was about to be undertaken in China. In common with France, we had addressed written remonstrances to the Court of Naples, which had been followed up by the withdrawal of our representative at that Court; and in 1856, our Minister at Washington had been abruptly dismissed from the United States.[2] Thus the conclusion of the peace of Paris had been followed by war with Persia, by impending war with China, by the suspension of diplomatic relations with a small Italian state, and the dismissal of our representative from the great transatlantic republic. Sober citizens, intent on promoting their business or on pushing their trade, might be pardoned for thinking that the excessive activity of the British Foreign Office was as unnecessary as it was unwise.

[1] The history of this war will be found in *Hist. of England*, vol. vi. p. 265 *seq.* I have not, therefore, thought it necessary to relate it again.

[2] See *ante*, p. 26, note.

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The state of parties.

The electricity which was disturbing the atmosphere of the Foreign Office was affecting opinion in the House of Commons, and in that House Lord Palmerston could not rely on an assured majority. The Parliament of 1852, which still survived in 1857, had been elected under Lord Derby's auspices and contained a strong and coherent Conservative minority. The strength of this minority made it difficult for any ministry to stand which did not combine in its ranks all the elements which had temporarily coalesced to overthrow Lord Derby in 1852. It was an appreciation of this fact which had suggested the formation of the Coalition Ministry of Lord Aberdeen. But this Government had been wrecked, after two years of office, on the rocks of the Russian War, and some of its ablest members—like Mr. Gladstone and Sir James Graham—had recrossed the floor of the House and were coquetting with the Conservative leader,[1] or, like Lord John Russell, were sulking in a solitary tent on a Liberal bench. These defections, if they had been alone, might have imperilled the continuance of Lord Palmerston's Ministry; and, unhappily for Lord Palmerston, he had little sympathy with the small but powerful body of men who had done so much by their advocacy to secure the country the blessing of cheap bread, and who were doing so much to awaken it to the dangers of interference in the affairs of other nations. Lord Palmerston, in short, could hardly hope to stand, unless he succeeded in combining in his support all sections of the so-called Liberal party; and between him and Mr. Cobden, for example, there was a wider gulf fixed than that which separated him from the Conservatives on the front Opposition bench.

[1] Until Mr. Morley's *Life of Gladstone* was published, few people knew how close were the relations between Lord Derby and Mr. Gladstone at the beginning of 1857. See book iv. chap. viii.

The Session had hardly begun before the dissentient Liberals found an opportunity for displaying their hostility to the Minister. The financial arrangements of the year were of exceptional importance. The war with Russia was over; but the taxation which the war had necessitated remained.[1] It was everywhere felt that the first business of Parliament was the relief of the taxpayer, and that the revision of the financial system was its first duty to discharge.

The Budget of 1853.

In 1857, it must be recollected, the country had not forgotten the brilliant prospects which had been held out to it by the Budget of 1853. In renewing the income tax in that year, and in extending its operation to Ireland and to incomes of 100*l.* a year, Mr. Gladstone had made provision for its reduction in 1855 to 6*d.*, in 1857 to 5*d.*, and for its final abolition in 1860, when the long annuities, as they were called, or a temporary debt imposing a charge of more than 2,000,000*l.* a year, expired. In the same Budget he had proposed to provide for the gradual reduction of the tea duties from 2*s.* 2½*d.* to 1*s.* per pound.[2] The nation had therefore concluded from Mr. Gladstone's sanguine rhetoric—and Mr. Gladstone never spoke with more effect than in proposing the Budget of 1853—that the consumer, in a few years, would secure the great advantage of cheaper tea, and that the income taxpayer, in a few years more, would see the last of a tax which he had regarded as a grievous burden. How far Mr. Gladstone was prudent in attempting to forecast the future, is a matter on which men may reasonably differ; but perhaps, on the whole, that Finance Minister is the wisest who confines his proposals to the year in which he is speaking. Mr. Gladstone's example is at any rate a warning

[1] With the exception of the war malt tax, which had expired in the course of 1856.

[2] See Sir Stafford Northcote's *Twenty Years of Financial Policy* pp. 193–198.

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that a Chancellor of the Exchequer will do well to remember that, in politics, few things ever happen except the unforeseen. Before Mr. Gladstone brought forward another Budget, the country was drifting into the Crimean War; and long before 1860 the expense of that war, and the increased expenditure which was its indirect result, made it hopeless for him or for his successors to redeem the pledges which he had been sanguine enough to give in 1853.

The Budget of 1854.

In 1854, indeed, when Mr. Gladstone introduced his second Budget, the Crimean War had not actually broken out; but the Government had decided, as a precautionary measure, on despatching a force of 25,000 men to the East. All that Mr. Gladstone in the first instance thought it necessary to do was to provide for the cost of sending out these men and of bringing them home again; but the expense raised the estimated expenditure of the year to 56,189,000*l.*, a sum far larger than the income at Mr. Gladstone's disposal. To meet the deficiency, Mr. Gladstone decided on doubling the income tax during the first six months of the year. Two months later, the actual outbreak of the war compelled him to make a much larger provision, and Mr. Gladstone doubled the income tax for the whole year, increased the duties on Scotch and Irish spirits, revised the sugar duties, and raised the malt duty from 2*s.* 8½*d.* to 4*s.* per bushel. In addition he thought it necessary to raise Exchequer bonds to the amount of 6,000,000*l.*, one-third of the sum raised being repayable in each of the years 1858, 1859, 1860.[1]

There was undoubtedly something heroic in this finance. Mr. Gladstone, with a great war in prospect, was virtually asking the country to bear the whole cost of it, or at any rate to repay within six years the

[1] Sir Stafford Northcote's *Twenty Years of Financial Policy*, pp. 243–252.

whole of the temporary debt which he found himself compelled to raise. But he could have hardly concealed from himself that his new proposal made the promises of 1853 recede into a distant horizon. He was finding it necessary to double the tax which he had specially selected for remission; and he was throwing on 1860, the year of so many hopes, the obligation of reducing one-third of the temporary debt which he was borrowing.

The Budget of 1855.

The fall of Lord Aberdeen, and the subsequent secession of the Peelites from Lord Palmerston's ministry, relieved Mr. Gladstone from the task of providing for the cost of the war in future years; and, in 1855–56, Sir G. C. Lewis—on whom the duty fell—found himself confronted with an expenditure of more than 86,000,000*l.* while he thought himself only able to rely on a revenue of little more than 63,000,000*l.* He met the deficiency by borrowing 16,000,000*l.* in Consols, by issuing 3,000,000*l.* in Exchequer bills, and by increasing the duties on tea, coffee, sugar, Scotch and Irish spirits, and by raising the income tax from 1*s.* 2*d.* to 1*s.* 4*d.* in the pound.[1] These changes made the promises of 1853 look more hollow than ever. The very classes who had been given the expectation of relief were the classes on whom the burden of new taxation was pressing with special severity.

The provision which the Chancellor of the Exchequer thus made did not prove sufficient to meet the whole expenses of the year. Later in the Session, Sir G. C. Lewis found it necessary to raise an additional 4,000,000*l.* in Exchequer bills, while early in 1856—before the close of the financial year—he obtained authority for borrowing a further 5,000,000*l.* by the issue of consolidated stock. The peace, which happily succeeded, afforded a welcome relief to the

[1] *Twenty Years of Financial Policy*, p. 267.

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The Budget of 1856.

Exchequer; and in moving the Budget of 1856–57, Sir G. C. Lewis, if he was unable to remit, at any rate found it unnecessary to impose additional, taxation. In order, however, to repay the remaining expenses of the war, he raised a further sum of 5,000,000*l.* in Consols.[1] Thus the war had added 26,000,000*l.*, or more exactly some 26,930,000*l.*,[2] to the capital of the funded debt, while at the same time authority had been granted for the issue of some 13,000,000*l.* of Exchequer bonds and Exchequer bills, and for funding another 3,000,000*l.* of Exchequer bills. As, however, these powers were not fully exercised, the unfunded debt during the war did not increase by more than 12,000,000*l.*[3] Other changes, moreover, which were concurrently made in the debt affected these figures; and the actual addition to the debt during the years of war may be placed at 37,000,000*l.* The balances in the Exchequer rose at the same time by

[1] *Twenty Years of Financial Policy*, pp. 278, 279. The three loans in Consols were raised on different principles. The loan of 16,000,000*l.* in 1855 was raised at par; but for each 100*l.* the country undertook to provide an annuity of 3*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.* for thirty years and of 3*l.* in perpetuity afterwards. This plan was much criticised; and, in the first loan of 1856, Sir G. C. Lewis undertook to give 111*l.* 2*s.* 2*d.* consolidated stock for every 100*l.* which he received in money. The credit of the country had sufficiently improved in May 1856, when he issued his second loan of 5,000,000*l.*, to enable him to stipulate that the contractors (Messrs. Rothschild) should receive only 107*l.* 10*s.* 7*d.* in stock for each 100*l.* which they gave in money. The joint effect of these two last transactions was that the country received 10,000,000*l.* and created in return for it stock exceeding 10,930,000*l.* See report, *Public Income and Expenditure*, vol. ii. p. 559.

[2] 1st loan of 1855–6, 16,000,000*l.*; 2nd loan of 1855–6, and loans of 1856–7, 10,930,000*l.*; total, 26,930,000*l.*

[3] Sir G. C. Lewis said in 1857 that the debt created during the war was: Funded Debt, 30,265,000*l.*; Exchequer Bonds, 7,000,000*l.*; Exchequer Bills, 5,041,000*l.*; total, 42,306,000*l.* *Hansard*, vol. cxliv. p. 619. Not 41,041,000*l.*, as Sir S. Northcote states, *Twenty Years of Financial Policy*, p. 295. I cannot, however, reconcile Sir G. C. Lewis's figures with the exact facts. The figures are so complicated that I think a much fairer inference may be drawn from the results. The total capital of the funded debt, which stood on the 5th of January, 1854, at about 755,000,000*l.*, stood on the 31st of March, 1857, at about 780,000,000*l.* The unfunded debt at the same time rose from rather more than 16,000,000*l.* to a little less than 28,000,000*l.* The net debt, therefore, did not increase by more than 37,000,000*l.* during the years given.

more than 4,000,000*l.*,[1] and it is probably therefore fair to say that the war added rather less than 33,000,000*l.* to the net indebtedness of the nation.[2]

In 1857 the taxation, which had been imposed during the continuance of the struggle for the purpose of the war, had expired or was about to expire. The war duty on malt had ceased automatically on the 5th of July, 1856; the war duties on tea, coffee, and sugar ceased on the 5th of April, 1857. The war income tax was technically leviable till the 6th of April, 1858; but the Government considered that they could not take advantage of the accidental wording of the Act under which the tax had been granted, to levy the additional duty for a year longer than Parliament had obviously intended, and that they were bound to consider that the war income tax, like the war duties on tea, sugar, and coffee, expired on the 5th of April, 1857.[3]

The Budget of 1857.

This decision left the Chancellor of the Exchequer in a position of some difficulty; for, on the one hand, excluding the arrears of war taxation, the whole available revenue, on which he thought he could rely in future years, amounted to only 62,015,000*l.*,[4] while, on

[1] From 4,485,000*l.* on the 5th of January, 1854, to 8,668,000*l.* on the 31st of March, 1857.

[2] It is right to add that 2,000,000*l.* of this sum was lent to Sardinia, and formed therefore no charge on the taxpayers of this country.

[3] The war malt duty expired on the 5th of July next after the ratification of a definitive treaty of peace. The war duties on tea, sugar, and coffee were granted 'till the 5th day of April inclusive which shall first happen after the end of twelve months from the date of a definitive treaty of peace with Russia;' while the war income tax was given 'until the 6th day of April which shall first happen after the expiration of one year from the ratification of a definitive treaty of peace and no longer.' It so happened that the treaty of peace was signed on the 30th of March, but was not ratified till the 27th of April, 1856, and it followed, therefore, from the language of the Acts that, while the war duties on tea &c. were to cease after the 5th of April, 1857, in strict law the income tax could be levied at the war rate till after the 5th of April, 1858. See the Acts 17 & 18 Vict., cap. xxvii., and 18 & 19 Vict., cap. xx. and xxi., and cf. Sir G. C. Lewis in *Hansard*, vol. cxliv. pp. 635, 658, 659.

[4] I have arrived at this sum by deducting the arrears of the war income tax from the estimated proceeds of the income tax given in a subsequent note. See note 1, p. 72. But even so the 62,015,000*l*

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the other hand, if the war was over, it had left a legacy behind it in the shape of an increased and increasing expenditure. The normal expenditure of the nation, which Mr. Gladstone in 1853 had placed at about 52,000,000*l.*, now exceeded 63,000,000*l.*, and including the sum required for the repayment of debts, the amount which it was necessary to raise for the service of the year reached 65,474,000*l.* Whatever other moral could be drawn from these figures, it was tolerably plain to any sensible person, who took the trouble to examine them, that the promise which Mr. Gladstone had made in 1853 was one which it would be very difficult to fulfil in 1860.[1]

Such, however, was not the opinion of the most eminent members of the House of Commons in 1857. Beyond all dispute the three men in the House outside the Cabinet who carried the greatest weight in debate were Lord John Russell, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Disraeli. All three men were agreed in thinking

is too high, since it includes the estimated receipts from the duties on tea at the higher rate at which Sir G. C Lewis left it. I have no material, however, for making this further correction.

[1] The expenditure of the nation (estimated in the Budget) in 1853 and 1857 was as follows:

	1853–54.	1857–58.
Debt	£27,804,000	£28,550,000
Consol. Fund	2,503,000	1,770,000
Army and Ordnance	10,165,000	11,625,000
Navy, including Packet Service	7,035,000	9,074,000
Miscellaneous	4,476,000	7,250,000
Kaffir War	200,000	—
Collection of Revenue	—	4,215,000
Superannuation	—	475,000
Persian War	—	265,000
	£52,183,000	63,224,000
Redemption of Exchequer Bonds		2,000,000
Sinking Fund on second Loan of £5,000,000		250,000
		£65,474,000

Hansard, vol. cxliv. pp. 639, 640, and cf. *History of England*, vol. v. p. 475, note. It is fair to point out that in 1853–54 the expenditure did not, and that in 1857–58 it did, include the cost of collecting the revenue and of superannuation. These services were in 1853–54 paid out of the gross receipts on their way to the Exchequer.

that the road to safety and no income tax lay through the reduction of military and naval expenditure. In the debate on the Address, Lord John Russell said: 'We have been accustomed (and very great ministers have sanctioned the practice) to keep up low establishments in time of peace; and, though there has been always a complaint in the first year of war that we have been very unprepared, somehow or other after a time we have generally felt ourselves strong enough to meet our enemy;' and he concluded: 'It is by such a system, and by relying on the greatness of the country and on the spirit of our people, that you will be the most formidable in war, and not by any new-fangled system of increased estimates during a time of peace.' Mr. Gladstone, speaking on the same occasion, registered his 'earnest and solemn protest against the enlargement of the whole system of peace expenditure.' But Mr. Disraeli went much farther. He expressed a hope that the glories of the late war would not induce the people to sanction extravagant military establishments. He added his conviction that the more the burden of the people was reduced, the greater would be their strength when the hour of danger came; and he announced his intention to formulate resolutions in the spirit of this language, declaring that war taxation should not be levied in time of peace, and that the promises of 1853 should in spirit be adhered to. He added, in language which may seem strange to a generation which, forgetting Mr. Disraeli's conduct from 1857 to 1866, has made him the hero of a policy opposed to his declarations in those years:

'I cannot but believe that, if these resolutions are carried, we shall witness some beneficial changes in the financial system of the country. I think we shall give a great impetus to salutary economy; and shall in a most significant manner express our opinion that it is

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not advisable that England should become what is called "a great military nation." '[1]

The Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Thus the Finance Minister, in 1857, was confronted with a double difficulty. The resources at his disposal were insufficient to cover the expenditure for which he had to provide; and the men whose weight in the House was incontestable were unanimous in demanding retrenchment as the only remedy for the situation. In the Cabinet, Lord Palmerston was upholding British interests with a vigour which necessitated large armaments; and in the House of Commons, Mr. Disraeli was denouncing the policy which was apparently making us a great military nation. The man who held the office of Finance Minister in 1857, and on whom the preparation of the Budget, in consequence, fell, had little in common either with Lord Palmerston or with Mr. Disraeli. Without the imagination which attracts, or the eloquence which commands, attention, he had knowledge, ability, and judgment. He was one of the few men of his age, or indeed of any age, who habitually thought. But constant thinking had made him cautious and sceptical, and left him none of the enthusiasm which gives men confidence in themselves, and gains them the support of their fellows. Thus his temperament, which made him a power in the Cabinet, and which won him respect in the House, procured him little or no notice in the country. In the inner circle of his own colleagues, and possibly in the rather larger circle of his friends in Parliament, he was regarded as one of the few men who might possibly preside over the fortunes of the country. Outside the House, beyond the narrow limits of the little county in which he lived, he would hardly have been able to command a large audience, or to hold it together for an hour.

It is the usual custom of Finance Ministers to delay

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxliv. pp. 133, 135, 152, 185, 186.

their Budget statements till the close of the financial year. Sir G. C. Lewis showed his appreciation of the exceptional circumstances in which he was placed by making it on the 13th of February. He met an exceptional situation by a commonplace method. With an income insufficient to cover the expenditure of 65,474,000*l.*, it was clear that he could not afford to give up the whole of the additional taxation imposed during the war, and he decided, while reducing the income tax to the full extent contemplated by the Act, to slacken the rate of reduction in the duties on tea, coffee, and sugar.[1] This modification, the arrears in the war income tax, and the increasing supplies which he hoped to derive in a year of peace and apparent prosperity, justified him in placing the whole revenue of the year at 66,365,000*l.*[2] As he had estimated the expenditure at 65,474,000*l.*, he was left with a surplus of 891,000*l.* So far as the year 1857–58 was concerned, there was little doubt that the surplus was adequate; but, as a large portion of the surplus was due to the arrears of the war income tax, which would not be available after the current financial year,

[1] The duty on tea would have fallen automatically from 1*s.* 9*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* per lb. in April 1857 and to 1*s.* per lb. in April 1858. Sir G. C. Lewis asked the House to fix it at 1*s.* 7*d.* in 1857–58, 1*s.* 5*d.* in 1858–59, 1*s.* 3*d.* in 1859–60, and at 1*s.* in later years. See *Hansard*, vol. clxiv. p. 661. For the similar treatment of the sugar duties see *ibid.*, p. 662.

[2] It may be convenient to place side by side (1) Sir G. C. Lewis's estimate on the 13th of February, 1857, of the revenue of 1856–57, and (2) his estimate of the revenue of 1857–58:

	Estimate for 1856–57.	Estimate for 1857–58.
Customs	£23,600,000	£22,850,000
Excise	17,600,000	17,000,000
Stamps	7,265,000	7,450,000
Taxes	3,110,000	3,150,000
Income Tax	16,250,000	11,450,000
Post Office	2,800,000	3,000,000
Crown Lands	260,000	265,000
Miscellaneous	1,000,000	1,200,000
	£71,885,000	£66,365,000

Hansard, vol. cxliv. pp. 632, 662.

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the Budget was open to the criticism that it postponed till 1858–59 the difficulty of providing a revenue adequate to cover the increased expenditure of the country, and that it failed to make any provision whatever for redeeming the pledges and promises of his predecessor in 1853.

His critics.

Such, however, was Sir G. C. Lewis's plan. Perhaps no Budget during the last fifty years of the nineteenth century excited stronger passions or was assailed with greater vehemence. Mr. Disraeli, who led the opposition to it, redeemed the promise which he had made in the debate on the Address, by moving a resolution affirming that the Budget was not calculated to secure the country against the risk of a deficiency in the succeeding years, and asked the House to affirm that the income and expenditure should be readjusted in such a way that Parliament might have a reasonable prospect of getting rid of the income tax in 1860.[1] Mr. Gladstone, who said in private that the Budget was 'the worst that was ever produced,'[2] assailed it in a speech of extraordinary vehemence. He declared that, while the Minister was claiming credit for reducing taxation, he was really increasing taxation, since he was continuing the duties on tea and sugar at a higher rate than Parliament had contemplated. He complained that Sir G. C. Lewis was making no adequate provision for the necessities of future years, or, in the present year, for the expense of the Persian war, and that he was making no provision of any kind for the expense of

[1] The precise words of Mr. Disraeli's motion are: 'In the opinion of this House, it would be expedient, before sanctioning the financial arrangements for the ensuing year, to adjust the estimated income and expenditure in the manner which shall appear best calculated to secure the country against the risk of a deficiency in the years 1858–59 and 1859–60, and to provide for such a balance of revenue and charge respectively in the year 1860 as may place it in the power of Parliament at that period, without embarrassment to the finances, altogether to remit the income tax.' *Ibid.*, p. 970.

[2] *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 86, and see an interesting passage in Mr. Morley's *Gladstone*, vol. i. p. 560.

the war with China. He argued, therefore, that there was no guarantee that the ensuing year would close with a surplus, while he insisted that in future years, when there would be no arrears of war income tax to collect, and when the duties on tea and coffee would be further reduced, the country would find itself in the presence of a deficit so large that it would be necessarily embarrassing.

But this was only one side of Mr. Gladstone's case. He went on to show that Parliament, in 1853, had provided for the extinction of the income tax in 1860, and that Sir G. C. Lewis was making its extinction impracticable; and he proceeded to argue that, while on every previous occasion in which an income tax had been imposed in times of peace, it had been used as a lever to enable the Minister to accomplish commercial reforms of clear and undoubted benefit, on this occasion, on the contrary, the Minister was reimposing the income tax at its old rate, and at the same time continuing the duties on tea and sugar at higher rates than Parliament had contemplated. Such a course appeared to Mr. Gladstone's indignant imagination as a repudiation of the principle which Sir Robert Peel had laid down in 1842 and 1845, and which he himself had extended in 1853, and which, it was almost universally admitted, had done so much to promote the prosperity of the country and the weal of the people.[1]

Its adoption.

The House, however, declined to be carried away by Mr. Gladstone's indignant eloquence. It probably considered that, whatever arrangements might be necessary for other years, Sir G. C. Lewis was proposing a not unfair scheme for the necessities of 1857–58; and it declined to follow Mr. Disraeli, on the one hand, in

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxliv. p. 985. For a temperate and favourable review of Sir G. C. Lewis's finance, the reader should turn to Bagehot, *Biographical Studies*, pp. 241, 242.

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insisting that it was the duty of Parliament to provide in 1857 for the extinction of the income tax in 1860, or to accept, on the other hand, Mr. Gladstone's contention that the continuance of the income tax was only justifiable if large commercial reforms, which the country was not in a position to afford, were at the same time effected.[1]

The success of the Budget temporarily strengthened Lord Palmerston's position. He had successfully resisted an attack on an important portion of his policy, which had been led by Mr. Disraeli, which had been supported by Mr. Gladstone, and which had been assisted by Mr. Cobden. But it was already evident that a more formidable question was preparing difficulties for the Minister. Within three days of the successful division, the policy of the Ministry towards China was arraigned in the House of Lords by Lord Derby, and in the House of Commons by Mr. Cobden; and, while these debates were in actual progress, Lord Derby communicated to a private meeting of the Conservative party the significant fact that he was in alliance with Mr. Gladstone.[2] An attack, which was made in one House by the leader of the Conservative party, which was led, in the other, by the leader of the free-traders, which was supported by Mr. Gladstone, and which, as was immediately afterwards apparent, was assisted by Lord John Russell, was obviously based on a combination which placed the Minister in a minority in the House of Commons.

The origin of the Chinese War.

The facts were as follows. A lorcha, named the Arrow, built by a Chinese owner in 1854, and sold to

[1] Mr. Disraeli's amendment was rejected by 286 votes to 206. *Hansard*, vol. cxliv. p. 1149.

[2] This is the interpretation which the *Times* gave of the speech. See the *Times*, 2nd of March, 1857. And the words 'in alliance' are taken from that paper. Greville, writing two days afterwards, said: 'Derby has announced to his assembled party that he is ready to join with Gladstone, though he has not done so yet.' *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 95.

a Chinese owner in Canton, was subsequently transferred to a Chinese merchant resident in Hong Kong. It was the custom of the British authorities at Hong Kong to treat Chinese merchants resident in the colony as quasi-naturalised British subjects; and the owner of the Arrow claimed and obtained, in accordance with this custom, a letter of register from the Chief Superintendent of Trade, entitling it to certain privileges of trade in Chinese ports, and authorising it, when so trading, to fly the British flag. These letters of register were directed to be granted to British vessels under a treaty made with China in 1843. They were renewable annually; and, as a matter of fact, the letter of register of the Arrow was renewed on the 27th of September, 1855, and expired on the 27th of September, 1856. The Arrow was commanded by a British subject, an Irishman, who had under his orders a crew of thirteen Chinese sailors. Apart from the very serious questions (i) whether a vessel owned by a Chinese merchant, who was only resident on British territory and had not been formally naturalised, was entitled to receive a letter of register, or (ii) whether a vessel manned almost exclusively by a Chinese crew could be registered as a British vessel, it is certain that in the case of the Arrow the letter of register and the privilege which it gave expired on the 27th of September, 1856.

The Arrow

On the morning of the 8th of October, 1856, while the Arrow was lying at the mouth of the Canton River, she was boarded, in the temporary absence of her captain, by Chinese officials, who insisted on carrying off the whole of her crew, on the ground that one of them had been engaged in acts of piracy. On the remonstrance of her captain, who returned before the arrest had been completed, two of the crew were left in charge of the vessel, but the remainder of the men were taken from her. It is not actually certain whether the

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Arrow at the time was flying the British flag or not; but it is certain that, as her letter of register had expired, she had no clear right to be flying it.[1]

On these proceedings being reported to Mr. Parkes, our Consul at Hong Kong, he demanded that the men arrested should be brought to the British Consulate and that the charge against them should be investigated there. On the refusal of this demand he appealed to Commissioner Yeh, the Chinese Governor of Canton, and at the same time wrote for instructions to Sir John Bowring, the Governor and Superintendent of Trade at Hong Kong. In the negotiations which ensued Sir John, though he was aware that the Arrow had no right to fly a British flag, her register having expired, relied on the Chinese authorities being ignorant of this circumstance, and insisted on an apology, on an undertaking to respect the British flag in the future, and on the public liberation of the arrested men. Commissioner Yeh, on the contrary, contended that the Arrow was a purely Chinese vessel, and that at the time of the arrest she was not flying the British flag, and had no British subject on board of her.[2]

[1] It ought, perhaps, on the other hand, to be stated that it was the custom at Hong Kong to give these letters of register to vessels owned by Chinese who were settled at Hong Kong and tenants of Crown property; that a similar custom prevailed at Singapore; and that the Arrow's letter of register had expired when she was at sea, and vessels at sea were not called upon to renew their register until they reached the waters of the colony to which they belonged. See Lord Clarendon's remarks in *Hansard*, vol. cxliv. pp. 1198–1200. But it must be recollected that though the issue of a letter of register to the Arrow gave the vessel rights and privileges in British waters and in British courts, no British letter of register could give any rights or privileges to a subject of a foreign country against the country of which he is a subject. See Lord Lyndhurst in *ibid.*, p. 1214. But the strongest condemnation of Sir John Bowring's attitude, respecting the Arrow, is to be found in the words of Lord Elgin, who was employed to exact reparation from the Chinese. He wrote: 'I have hardly alluded in my ultimatum to that wretched question of the Arrow, which is a scandal to us, and is so considered, I have reason to know, by all except the few who are personally compromised.' Waldron's *Life of Lord Elgin*, p. 209.

[2] See *inter alia* Commissioner Yeh's own letters in *Parl. Papers*, Correspondence relating to Lord Elgin's Mission (1857–1859); pp. 102, 121.

Failing to secure redress by pacific means, Mr. Parkes, by Sir John Bowring's orders, called on the Admiral in command of the British squadron, Sir Michael Seymour, to enforce it. Sir Michael, in the first instance, seized a Chinese junk; but, as this seizure produced no effect, he attacked and took the forts which guarded the approaches to Canton. Thereupon Commissioner Yeh surrendered the twelve men who had been taken out of the Arrow, demanding that two of them, who had been accused of piracy, should be returned to be dealt with under Chinese law.

Most people will probably conclude that there were many reasons why Sir John Bowring should have closed the whole incident at this stage. Though the men taken from the Arrow had not been returned with the publicity which had been required, and though no apology had been tendered, the power of England had been effectually displayed, and reparation had been substantially granted. A knowledge that the expiration of the Arrow's letter of register virtually knocked the bottom out of the British case might, therefore, have disposed any ordinary diplomatist to moderation; but, so far from being moderate, Sir John declined to receive the men who had been returned, and raised a new demand. By a succession of treaties, made in 1843, 1846, and 1847,[1] British subjects, from the 6th of April, 1849, were secured free entrance to the town of Canton. The Chinese had, however, successfully evaded this stipulation. Successive British Governments, with their hands full elsewhere, had hesitated to enforce it, and the authorities at Hong Kong had been specially enjoined to be very circumspect in securing its fulfilment. Sir John Bowring, however, considered that the dispute about the Arrow afforded a convenient

The bombardment of Canton.

[1] These treaties are reprinted in *State Papers*, vol. xxxi. p. 132, vol. xxxiv. p. 26, and vol. xxxv. p. 6.

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opportunity for pressing the demand, and, as Commissioner Yeh returned no answer to it, directed Sir Michael Seymour to renew hostilities. On the British side Sir Michael Seymour easily succeeded in sinking a large number of junks, and in destroying some forts manned with hundreds of guns, for the power of defence does not depend on the weight of armaments, but on skill in using them. On the Chinese side Commissioner Yeh, probably feeling himself powerless, offered a reward of thirty dollars for the head of every Englishman.[1]

When these events occurred, it must be recollected that it took seven weeks for news to reach England from Hong Kong, and seven weeks more to send orders from England to China. No Government, therefore, however much it might have hesitated to approve all that had occurred, could have exerted any influence on the course of events for fourteen weeks after the commencement of hostilities at Canton.

In these circumstances a wise Minister, who regretted the rash conduct of his agent, might have hesitated to throw him over. He would probably, however, have taken care to point out to him that the original British case was not a very clear one, and that the new British demand was one which it would have been better not to make at all without direct authority from home. But a prudent course of this kind did not commend itself to Lord Palmerston. If Mr. Greville, who writes on the authority of Lord Granville (a member of the Cabinet), may be trusted, both Lord Palmerston and Lord Clarendon were under the impression that the proceedings at Canton would be received with great applause and satisfaction in England, and were

[1] For these events see *Hansard* vol. cxliv. pp. 1155, 1310, 1391, 1495, and 1589; *Ann. Reg.*, 1856, Hist., p. 256 (where there is a very temperate summary of the facts); Ashley's *Life of Palmerston*, vol. ii. p. 344; Morley's *Life of Cobden*, vol. ii. p. 187; *Greville Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 91 *seq.*

accordingly in a hurry to identify themselves with Sir John Bowring's action.[1] The story shows that Lord Palmerston understood the feeling of the country much more accurately than he gauged the opinion of the House of Commons; but it does not afford any excuse for the decision of the Minister. It was Lord Palmerston's duty in 1857 to determine what was just, not merely to consider what was popular; and justice, most people will think, was not on the side of Sir John Bowring.

Such were the main facts of the case which enabled the Conservatives under Lord Derby, and the free-traders under Mr. Cobden, to combine with an ex-Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, and an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Gladstone, in the most formidable assault which Lord Palmerston's Ministry had up to this time sustained. Most of these men had no difficulty in joining in the attack. They genuinely thought that Sir John Bowring had committed a series of acts of gross injustice, and had initiated most improperly a serious war. But Mr. Cobden and his immediate friends might have hesitated to press the case home, for Sir John Bowring, before he had gone to China, had made his reputation as a strong Liberal, and as one of the founders of the 'Westminster Review;' and the men who had, in other times, welcomed his assistance might naturally have hesitated to be foremost in condemning his action. Mr. Cobden and his friends, however, judged, and rightly judged, that public duty could not be neglected because of private friendship; and believing, as they did, that Sir John Bowring's action was an exaggerated instance of the indiscretion which had led us into previous wars, deemed it their duty to express their opinion in a manner which could not be misunderstood.

[1] *Greville*, vol. ii. p. 93.

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Proceedings in Parliament.

Thus it happened that the attack, which was led by Lord Derby in one House, was initiated by Mr. Cobden in the other. But, while both Houses were asked to condemn Sir John Bowring's conduct, the condemnation in each was expressed in different terms. In the Lords, Lord Derby moved a series of resolutions regretting the interruption of amicable relations between her Majesty's subjects and the Chinese authorities; asserting that the time was peculiarly unfavourable for pressing upon the Chinese a claim for the admission of British subjects into Canton, which had been left in abeyance since 1849, and declaring that operations of actual hostility ought not to have been undertaken without the express instructions previously received of her Majesty's Government. In the Commons, Mr. Cobden asked the House to resolve that 'the papers which have been laid upon the table fail to establish satisfactory grounds for the violent measures, resorted to at Canton in the late affair of the Arrow,' and to appoint a Select Committee 'to inquire into the state of our commercial relations with China.'

Lord Palmerston defeated in the Commons.

In the debate in the House of Lords, Lord Derby was reinforced by Lord Grey, who had been the colleague of Lord Palmerston under Lord Melbourne, by Lord Ellenborough, and by the Bishop of Oxford. In the Commons, Mr. Cobden received the active support of Mr. Disraeli and the whole Conservative party, of Lord John Russell, and Mr. Gladstone. No one who reads now the chief speeches in these memorable debates will doubt that the force of argument was on the side of the attack, and that the case against the Government received no satisfactory reply. Lord Lyndhurst in the one House, and Lord John Russell in the other, were practically unanswered, and perhaps unanswerable; but, in the Lords, the Ministry succeeded in obtaining the support of a sufficient

majority: in the Commons it found itself in a minority of sixteen votes.[1]

Oddly enough, the votes of the two Houses exactly reversed their relative positions towards Lord Palmerston seven years before. In 1850, Lord Stanley—who had since become Lord Derby—had carried a resolution condemning Lord Palmerston's policy towards Greece by almost exactly the same majority by which he was defeated in 1857.[2] And the resolution had been practically reversed by a vote of the House of Commons on Mr. Roebuck's motion approving Lord Palmerston's foreign policy. To complete the contrast, Mr. Roebuck, who had come to Lord Palmerston's rescue in 1850, both spoke and voted against the Government in 1857. But, of course, the majority against the Minister in the Commons in 1857 could not be disregarded like the majority against him in the Lords in 1850. The Cabinet, at once, saw that the vote must be regarded as fatal either to the Ministry who sustained, or to the House which inflicted it. With a correct appreciation of the feelings of the country, they decided on appealing to the constituencies, and, on the day succeeding that which followed the division, Lord Granville announced in one House, Lord Palmerston in the other, that as soon as the necessary arrangements could be made, the Ministry would throw 'upon the country the responsibility of determining what Administration shall be invested with the conduct and management of the affairs of the nation.'[3]

To the course which Ministers proposed to follow,

[1] The majority in the Lords was 146 to 110. *Hansard*, vol. cxliv. p. 1385. In the Commons the majority against the Government was 263 to 247. *Ibid.*, p. 1846. Considering the critical nature of the debate, the division was not a large one. But many Conservatives, who disliked the Chinese War, did not desire a change of Ministry; and many Liberals, who liked Lord Palmerston, could not conscientiously support the proceedings in China.

[2] By 37 votes instead of 36. *Hist. of England*, vol. v. p. 416, note.

[3] *Hansard*, vol. cxliv. pp. 1885, 1894.

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The dissolution of 1857.

no objection could be taken. Mr. Disraeli indeed, towards the close of the debate, had almost dared Lord Palmerston to take it. 'Let the noble lord,' he had said, 'not only complain to the country, but let him appeal to the country. . . . I should like to see the programme of the proud leader of the Liberal party—"No reform! New taxes! Canton blazing! Persia invaded!"'[1] He could not, therefore, refuse to facilitate the course which Lord Palmerston proposed. But there were two points on which other men naturally desired information. Mr. Cobden, who was afterwards supported by Mr. Gladstone, put the plain question, 'What is to go on in China' during the weeks which must elapse before a new Parliament can meet?[2] And Mr. Gladstone added the further question, What is to be done about finance? Are the complicated arrangements which Sir G. C. Lewis has proposed, affecting the revenue of the succeeding three years, to be sanctioned in the last moments of a condemned House of Commons?[3] With regard to the last question Sir G. C. Lewis stated that he intended, at once, to move the reduction of the income tax from 14*d.* to 7*d.*; to confine his proposals relative to tea, coffee, and sugar to the single financial year for which he was providing; and to fix the duty on tea at 1*s.* 5*d.* instead of, as he had originally proposed, at 1*s.* 7*d.* in the lb.[4] With regard to the first question, Lord Palmerston declared that there would be no change, and could be no change, in the policy of the Government. That policy is 'to maintain in China, as

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxliv. p. 1840. Mr. Cobden afterwards said the same thing. 'The noble lord sends his followers to the country with the cry, "Palmerston for ever! No reform! and a Chinese war!"' *Ibid.*, p. 1899. Mr. Disraeli's 'Canton blazing! Persia invaded!' had been used by him before in the debate on the Address. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1901, and cf. Mr. Gladstone, p. 1914.

[3] P. 1926.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 1937. It may be convenient to add that, in the new Parliament, Sir G. C. Lewis obtained the continuance of the duties on tea and sugar for three years instead of confining it to one year. *Hansard*, vol. cxlvii. p. 1485.

elsewhere, security for the lives and property of British subjects;' but he added that, without in any way undervaluing the merits of Sir John Bowring, the Government thought it desirable to entrust the negotiations, which must probably take place, to some individual who could proceed direct from this country with their verbal instructions, and who 'would be likely to carry more weight than any person who might happen now to be in China.'[1] Nine days afterwards it was formally announced in the 'Times' that Lord Elgin, who had served with efficiency as Governor-General of Canada, had accepted the mission.

These statements facilitated the course of business, and enabled the Ministry to make arrangements for an early dissolution. The centre of gravity in politics was suddenly transferred from the House of Commons to the constituencies; and members, anxious to ascertain what the electors would determine, paid only a desultory attention to their duties in the House. They were not long in doubt as to the decision at which the country would arrive. However formidable the position of the Opposition had proved in debate, the arguments on which they had relied were too technical to be understood by the masses of the people. They, perhaps, could not have been expected to appreciate the exact legal status of the Arrow, or the justice of the measures which Sir John Bowring had taken to obtain redress; but they knew that the Arrow was 'a vessel of an ostensibly British character, and engaged in British trade; that she had a British captain—whether up or down, a British flag; whether in full force or not, a British register.' They were taught that Yeh, under whose orders her flag had been ignored, and her crew taken from her, was 'one of the greatest monsters that ever disgraced

The attitude of the country.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxliv. pp. 1935, 1936.

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humanity:'[1] they were assured that the Chinese, by refusing British merchants access to Canton, were disregarding the express provisions of a treaty, and were injuring British trade and British interests. What, in comparison with such facts as these, were obscure questions whether the Arrow should have had a letter of register, or whether her letter of register had or had not expired? British interests were at stake; and the country was prepared to support the Minister who told them that he was ready to assert the cause and uphold the honour of the nation.[2]

Thus the issue, on which the country was virtually determined to pronounce its decision, was quite different from that on which the House of Commons had given its vote. The House had condemned the Government for supporting the methods which Sir John Bowring had adopted; the country hardly paused to consider the propriety of these methods, but rallied to the Minister who was ready, at any cost, to maintain the interests of British trade and sustain the honour of the British flag. Assurances of support flowed in on the Prime Minister from every part of England. The leading merchants of London engaged in the Chinese trade led the way with an address; the Corporation of the City followed with a vote of confidence. The Lord Mayor seized the occasion to invite the Minister to a banquet,

[1] These extracts are from the leading article in the *Times* of the 2nd of March, 1857. 'Poor' Yeh—the epithet is Lord Elgin's (*Life*, p. 211)—seems to have been a normal specimen of his race, without more vices or more virtues than the ordinary Chinese official.

[2] Lord Palmerston thoroughly appreciated the position of the country. He said in the House, 'There are some members of the Legislature who raise the nicest legal quibbles, who endeavour to excuse the most atrocious crimes, who take part with any foreigner against an Englishman, and who, like the hon. member for the West Riding [Mr. Cobden], almost repudiate their country.' *Hansard*, vol. cxliv. p. 1832. He said at the Mansion House seventeen days afterwards, 'If the day should come when peace is to be sought by humiliation and degradation, the country must look elsewhere for the instruments of national dishonour and disgrace.' *Times*, 21st of March, 1857.

which gave him the opportunity of delivering an electioneering speech.[1] Thoughtful men gravely censured the language which he employed, and which they declared unworthy of him.[2] It was, at any rate, exactly suited to the opinion of the hour, and nicely calculated to fan the breeze of popularity which was bearing him to victory. The result of the election was already certain before a single poll was taken. The country, it was soon evident, had decided on parting with the men who had opposed the policy of the Minister. Even the reputation which Lord John Russell had acquired, and the services which he had rendered, seemed, at one moment, insufficient to secure his re-election for the City. Conservative candidates found it necessary, in some places, to explain that they did not disapprove Lord Palmerston's policy. No explanations were either forthcoming or would have been accepted in 1857 from free traders and Peelites. Mr. Cardwell, though he had held high office, was defeated at Oxford; Mr. Frederick Peel, though he held office under Lord Palmerston, was defeated at Bury. The free traders were almost swept away. Mr. Cobden, who did not venture to stand for his old seat in the West Riding, was beaten at Huddersfield; Mr. Bright was left at the bottom of the poll in Manchester; Mr. Milner Gibson shared his defeat; Mr. Fox was thrown out at Oldham; Mr. Miall at Rochdale. These men had been denounced by the Prime Minister as the organisers of a combination with the Tories to eject him from office; and the country responded with no uncertain voice. The services which they had rendered, the boon which they had conferred on the people in giving them cheap bread, were forgotten in 1857. All that the country recollected was that they had opposed

[1] See *Times*, 9th, 10th, and 21st of March, 1857.

[2] See *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 100.

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the Crimean War, that they had condemned Sir John Bowring's policy, that they had deserted Lord Palmerston.

The victory of Lord Palmerston.

The aspect of the House of Commons was changed by the election. One hundred and eighty-nine men who had not sat in the Parliament of 1852 were returned.[1] The small and loosely knit Palmerstonian majority was turned into a large and compact majority; and, 'for the first time in his long career,' Lord Palmerston found himself 'at the head of a party as well as of a Government.'[2] As in the case of Mr. Pitt, the vote of the country had been pronounced, not in favour of a policy, but in favour of a man. It was Lord Palmerston's popularity, the confidence which was felt in his high bearing, which had turned the scale. The other members of the Cabinet hardly counted in the decision. Men who knew might rely on the experience of Lord Lansdowne, the sagacity of Sir George Lewis, the prudence of Lord Clarendon, the capacity of Sir George Grey, the judgment of Lord Granville, and the dexterity of Sir Charles Wood; but none of these men impressed themselves on the people at large. If Lord Palmerston had been deserted by all his colleagues, the issue would not have been affected. It was his popularity, his courage, his *civis Romanus* policy, which had carried the election.

There was one other respect in which the aspect of the new House of Commons differed from that of the old. For nearly eighteen years Mr. Shaw Lefevre had filled the chair. No man had ever discharged the high functions of the Speakership with greater dignity or to greater advantage. Nature had endowed him with high qualifications for the office. An imposing

[1] *Life of Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 26.

[2] The phrase is taken from the *Times'* Review of the Session. See the *Times*, 29th of August, 1857.

presence, a rich and sonorous voice, impressed themselves on the House. Always fair, always courteous, with a knowledge that was rarely at fault, and a temper that was never ruffled, men yielded at once to his authority, and acknowledged the grace with which it was exercised. Later critics have indeed observed that Mr. Shaw Lefevre's Speakership fell in easier times than those which tried the capacity of some of his successors. But those, who are aware of the disorder into which the House of Commons had fallen under the rule of his predecessor, and contrast it with the order which he preserved and left as a tradition to his successors, will not be disposed to accept this contention, and will place Mr. Lefevre's services in the chair on at least a level with those of the greatest of the great men who, since his retirement, have held the Speakership.

The change in the Speakership.

Mr. Lefevre took advantage of the dissolution to obtain release from the heavy duties of an office which he had filled with so much honour to himself and with so much advantage to the public. It was natural that, with a triumphant majority at his back, Lord Palmerston should look for a successor among his own immediate followers; and his choice fell on Mr. Evelyn Denison, a member of a distinguished family, who had sat in Parliament for various constituencies for the best part of a generation, and who, though he had never held office or taken an active share in debate, had devoted much time and thought to the public and private business of the House, and had thus acquired a knowledge of its forms and rules which was in itself a high qualification for his important office.

Some days after the old Parliament had been dissolved, news reached England that the Emperor of China had enjoined his Commissioner—Yeh—to pursue a policy of conciliation towards the English.[1]

[1] *Times*, 28th of March, 1857; cf. *Greville*, vol. ii. p. 103.

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Lord Elgin's task seemed likely to be made easier by this intelligence. But, almost on the very day on which the new Parliament met, intelligence arrived of 'a strange feeling of discontent pervading the Indian army.'[1] Perhaps no man in England suspected the extent of the mischief which was thus brewing; yet in the days in which the electors were rallying to the polls in Lord Palmerston's support, and in the days in which the new Parliament was addressing itself to its work, events were rapidly occurring in Berhampore, Meerut, Delhi, and Cawnpore, which were destined to try the constancy of the British race as it had rarely been tried before.

The outbreak of the sepoy mutiny.

The history of the mutiny of the sepoy army in India has already been related in another work,[2] and it is not proposed to repeat the narrative here. In these pages it is necessary to allude to two circumstances only. In the first place, it was fortunate for England that the mutiny broke out at a moment when, either rightly or wrongly, troops were on their way to China. Diverted at Singapore to Calcutta on the request of Lord Canning, and with the consent of Lord Elgin, they afforded a welcome reinforcement to our overtaxed forces, and helped to strengthen the arms of England at the moment when she was in sorest need of assistance. And, in the next place, the crisis in India strengthened the power of Lord Palmerston. The people instinctively felt that the veteran statesman, who had brought the Crimean War to a conclusion, was the fittest man to deal with the new and graver difficulty which threatened the country. Thus the nation derived some assistance in its hour of danger from Lord Palmerston's policy; and Lord Palmerston obtained fresh security from the nation's difficulties.

If the Minister owed much of his popularity to

[1] *Greville*, vol. ii. p. 106. [2] See *Hist. of England*, vol. vi. p. 275 *seq.*

external difficulties, he increased it, in the debate on the Address, by promising consideration for a measure of organic reform. The Session, so Lord Palmerston thought, would be too short to make it either profitable or practicable to introduce a Reform Bill in 1857. It would, indeed, so he added, be impossible for him to enter into details, which the Government, he frankly admitted, had not had the opportunity of considering; but he promised that during the recess the matter should receive the most careful consideration, and he expressed a strong hope that it would be possible in 1858 to introduce a measure[1] 'calculated to meet the just expectations of the country, correct those defects which exist in the present system of representation, and extend the franchise to classes of persons now unmeritedly excluded from that privilege.' No one, of course, foresaw that these smooth words were to have no practical effect during Lord Palmerston's own lifetime, or during the nine years which followed their utterance; but they afforded the House of Commons a convenient excuse for temporarily shelving all parts of a question in which only a minority among its members took a real interest. When Mr. Locke King, the brother of Lord Lovelace, and the member for Surrey, asked the House to abolish the property qualification which members of Parliament were still required to possess, he was met with the convenient argument that there was an understanding that 'all questions connected with the representation of the people and the organisation of the House should be postponed until' 1858.[2] When Mr. Berkeley, the member for Bristol, on whom the parliamentary mantle of Mr. Grote, the historian, had fallen, rose to advocate the adoption of the ballot, his motion was summarily

Lord Palmerston promises reform.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlv. p. 66.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 222, 1545.

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defeated.[1] When Lord Robert Cecil, who had just commenced, as member for Stamford, a parliamentary career which was ultimately to place him in the highest position in the State, moved for a Select Committee to inquire into the expediency of collecting the votes at county and university elections by voting papers, the motion found no favour.[2] The great majority of members had, in fact, welcomed Lord Palmerston's promise that the question of parliamentary reform should be postponed, and were determined to refrain from dealing with any of the subsidiary details of a measure which had been temporarily shelved as a whole.

This decision left the House free to devote such time as it had at its disposal to other subjects. For some years before 1857 the opinion of the public had been gradually changing on the policy of the laws affecting marriage. From the earliest period of history two distinct views have been held on the subject of marriage. One view of the matter, which was embodied in the old Roman law,[3] was that marriage was a voluntary union terminable at any time at the instance of either of the parties to it. The other view, which was adopted by the early Christian Church, was that marriage was a Divine institution, and that the tie was indissoluble. Under the later Roman emperors the influence of the Church modified the view of marriage which had previously been held in the Roman world, and, though divorce was not actually prohibited, 'the pious austerity of [Justinian] broke out so vehemently as to enact that when husband and wife agreed to divorce one another both should be incapable of remarriage.'[4] In later ages

The law of divorce.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlvi. pp. 634, 682.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. cxlv. p. 1104.

[3] For the Roman law, see Bryce, *Studies in History and Jurisprudence*, vol. ii. pp. 386–416.

[4] He further directed the separation of the parties, their confinement in a convent, and the application of two-thirds of their property to their children. See Bryce, *ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 408.

the influence of the Reformation gradually impaired the notion that all marriages were indissoluble; but in Catholic countries the old view remained, and marriage was declared indissoluble by the Council of Trent,[1] even in the case of the adultery of one of the parties to it.

The theory of the Roman Church, indeed, which would have been intolerable if it had been rigidly carried out, was modified by its practice. Though the Church held that marriage was indissoluble, it conceded that antecedent circumstances might make it invalid. Marriages, for instance, could only be legally contracted where there was no consanguinity or affinity between the parties. The marriage of remote cousins, even of cousins in the eighth and ninth degree,[2] unless there was a dispensation from the Pope, became under the doctrine invalid; and this doctrine was pushed so far that Lord Coke was able to cite one case, in which a marriage was declared null because the husband had stood godfather to the cousin of his wife.[3] Such a decision was a tolerably strong proof that the Church itself was aware that, in certain cases, expedients must be found for dissolving a theoretically indissoluble union. After the Reformation, the view which the Church of Rome had adopted was naturally questioned by the Reformers. Henry VIII. and Edward VI. issued commissions on the subject; and the commissions, under the presidency of Archbishop Cranmer, enumerated a great number of causes for which they thought divorces should be granted.[4] Notwithstanding Arch-

[1] The Council of Trent declared all marriages illegal which were not celebrated before a priest. It marks, therefore, the final transition from the old Roman view of marriage as a voluntary union to the ecclesiastical view of it as a Divine institution. See Bryce, *Studies in History and Jurisprudence*, vol. ii. p. 418.

[2] See Lord Chancellor Cranworth in *Hansard*, vol. cxlii. p. 402.

[3] See Lord Cranworth, *ibid.*, vol. cxlv. p. 484.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. cxlvii. p. 719 and p. 724, where an extract from the *Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum*

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bishop Cranmer's report, however, the law remained unaltered, and marriage remained in the Reformed Church of England,[1] as it had been before the Reformation, practically indissoluble.

The Reformed Church, indeed, like the Church of Rome, gave a certain measure of relief. Where differences occurred between husband and wife, either from the adultery of the one, or from the gross cruelty of the one to the other, the ecclesiastical courts were in the habit of granting a divorce *a mensa et thoro*. Where, again, one party complained that the other was physically incapable of contracting marriage, or where it was shown that the two parties were within the degree of consanguinity prohibited by the Canon Law and still embodied in our Prayer Book, the ecclesiastical courts were in the habit of granting what was sometimes inaccurately called a divorce *a vinculo matrimonii*. In the latter case the court really and in effect annulled the marriage; and the parties were of course free to marry again. In the former case, the courts merely released the parties from the burdens and obligations of matrimony; but the marriage itself was not dissolved, and the parties were not free to enter on other matrimonial alliances.

Such was the state of the law up to 1857. For three centuries, however, the very rich and the very great had not acquiesced in it. From the days of Lord Northampton, who in 1550 obtained a divorce from his wife *a mensa et thoro*, and who, after procuring the divorce, married another lady and subsequently obtained a private Act of Parliament sanctioning what he had done, rich men who had obtained a divorce in the ecclesiastical courts were

stating the cases in which divorce should be permissible is given. Gibbon has an interesting passage on the marriage laws of the Empire in *Hist.*, vol. viii. p. 59 *seq.*

[1] In Scotland, the courts very soon after the Reformation began to grant divorces. Bryce, *Studies, &c.*, vol. ii. p. 433.

in the habit of applying to Parliament for permission to enter into new marriages.[1] Three or four private Acts according this permission were passed in the seventeenth century. In the course of the eighteenth century at least one such Act, and in the first half of the nineteenth century at least two such Acts, were on an average passed each year; two such Acts were passed in 1856, five in 1857. 'From the time when it was universally acknowledged that divorce by the ecclesiastical courts did not dissolve the vinculum of marriage'—so said the Lord Chancellor, in introducing the Divorce Act in 1857—'about 200 or 250 Acts had passed enabling parties on account of the adultery of the wife, and, in some very few instances, on account of the adultery of the husband, to marry again.'[2] These Bills, said the Attorney-General afterwards, had all 'originated in the House of Lords, and come down to [the House of Commons], sanctioned by the high authority of the Lords spiritual and temporal of the kingdom.' From 1703 'there was no recorded instance of any Bishop objecting in Parliament to the passing of any one of those Bills upon the ground that marriage by the law of England was indissoluble, and that [the law of England] was according to the rule of Scripture.'[3]

Before passing these Acts, Parliament—or the House of Lords—was in the habit of insisting (1) that a divorce *a mensa et thoro* should have first been obtained from an ecclesiastical court, and (2) that an action for damages for criminal conversation should have been brought and

[1] There was a distinction between these cases and that of Lord Northampton. In Lord Northampton's case, he had contracted a second marriage, and obtained from Parliament a confirmation of that marriage. In the other cases the parties had not married a second time, but obtained leave from Parliament to do so. The distinction arose from a decision of the courts, at the end of Elizabeth's reign, in Mr. Foljambe's case, to the effect that parties divorced *a mensa et thoro* were not at liberty to marry again. *Hansard*, vol. cxlv. p. 486.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 486.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. cxlvii. p. 725.

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sustained in a civil court. By a standing order of the House of Lords no Divorce Bill could be introduced which did not contain a provision against the marriage of the guilty parties; but this clause, which the standing orders rendered imperative, was uniformly struck out of the Bill in committee.[1]

While, then, in theory and in law, marriage was indissoluble in England, in practice the dissolution of a marriage was procurable by any one who did not shrink from applying to the ecclesiastical and civil courts, and who could afford the luxury of obtaining a private Act of Parliament. The great mass of people, however, naturally could not afford this expense; and it followed that, while the rich man was able to escape from the consequences of an unfortunate marriage and to obtain leave to take to himself a new wife, the poor man was unable to do so.

Mr. Justice Maule's judgment.

In 1845 this anomaly was brought forcibly before the public by the sentence of a wise and witty judge. At the Warwick Assizes in that year, a man was tried for and convicted of bigamy; and in passing sentence Mr. Justice Maule addressed the prisoner in some such words as these: 'You have been tried and convicted by a jury of your countrymen for marrying this woman, your first wife being still alive. You allege that your first wife has deserted you, that she is living with another man, and that you required another wife for the care of your home and of your children. But, in these circumstances, the course which you should have taken was plain. You should have instructed your solicitor to bring an action for criminal conversation against your wife and her paramour, and to apply to the ecclesiastical courts for a divorce *a mensa et thoro*. On succeeding in this action and this suit, your solicitor would have placed you in communication with a parliamentary

[1] See Lord Brougham, *Hansard*, vol. cxlvi. p. 206.

agent, who would have given you the necessary information how to proceed in procuring a private Act of Parliament dissolving your marriage and enabling you to marry again. You will perhaps reply that these proceedings would have involved you in an expense of hundreds or even thousands of pounds, which, as a poor man, you were unable to afford. But I would have you to know that the law of England knows no distinction between rich and poor. Instead of taking the proper course, you have committed the offence for which you have been convicted to-day by a jury of your fellow-countrymen, and it is consequently my duty to pass sentence upon you. The sentence of the Court is that you be imprisoned for one day; and, as this is Thursday, and the assizes opened on Monday, you may go.'

Ridicule occasionally is a greater force than argument; and Mr. Justice Maule's ridicule had the effect of drawing attention to the law of divorce more pointedly than any argument would have done. Within five years—for, even thus stimulated, opinion moved slowly—the Government found it necessary to appoint a Commission to inquire into the subject. Lord Campbell, who had just been made Lord Chief Justice of England, was placed at the head of the Commission, and other lawyers of eminence served upon it. The Commission, in due course, recommended that divorce by Act of Parliament should be discontinued, and that jurisdiction in matrimonial causes should be transferred from the ecclesiastical courts to a specially constituted civil court. Bills to give effect to these recommendations were introduced in 1854, in 1856, and again in 1857. When the Bill of 1856 was before the Lords, the Bishop of Oxford carried an amendment prohibiting the marriage of a husband or a wife, who had broken the Seventh Commandment, with the woman or man with whom the

The Divorce Bill of 1857.

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offence had been committed. The Bill, thus amended, reached the Commons in the middle of July; and Lord Palmerston, declaring the new clause to be 'cruel and immoral,' declined to assent to it, and the Bill was accordingly abandoned.[1] The Bill was reintroduced by the Chancellor soon after the meeting of the new Parliament in 1857; with a clause expressly authorising the guilty persons to marry; and the Archbishop of Canterbury, following the course which the Bishop of Oxford had pursued the year before, succeeded in procuring its amendment.[2] But the Primate's triumph was only short-lived. A fortnight later, the Lord Chancellor brought up a new clause, rendering the co-respondent in a divorce case liable to a fine of 10,000*l.*, and the Bishop of Oxford succeeded in enlarging it by making the guilty parties liable to fine or imprisonment as if they had been convicted of a misdemeanour.[3] Lord Grey, who had supported the Archbishop of Canterbury a fortnight before, declared that, as provision had now been made for the adequate punishment of wrong-doing, he should no longer insist on the amendment which the Archbishop of Canterbury had introduced.[4] Lord Grey's assistance enabled the Government to restore the clause to its original shape,[5] and the Bill reached the Commons towards the end of July without the provision which had led to its abandonment in the previous year.

The Divorce Act of 1857.

It was natural that a measure, which some devout people thought, offended against the law of God, should have provoked keen debate in a House where the Bishops of the Church of England still exercised a considerable authority. But it could hardly have been

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxliii. pp. 251, 710, 976.

[2] By a majority of 53 to 47. *Hansard*, vol. cxlv. p. 830. The amendment enabled the party on whose petition the divorce had been granted, to marry, but refused this indulgence to the guilty respondent.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 1413, 1414. On the third reading, the punishment of imprisonment was struck out of the Bill. *Ibid.*, vol. cxlvi. p. 216.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 1416.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 1418.

foreseen that it was destined to provoke much more formidable opposition in the Commons. Mr. Gladstone, who, on most subjects, was still vibrating between his Conservative sympathies and the Liberal opinions of his later years,[1] had always remained the firm opponent of change when he thought that change assailed the religion of the country. He encountered the Divorce Bill under one great disadvantage. He had himself been a member of the Cabinet which had sanctioned the introduction of the Bill of 1854. But this circumstance, though it afforded a convenient weapon for an adversary in debate, was no obstacle to Mr. Gladstone. He pleaded for delay on the 24th of July; he opposed the second reading of the Bill on the 31st in a speech of extraordinary eloquence and power; he resisted, when beaten on the principle, clause after clause in committee; and he only desisted from labours which, perhaps, have never been excelled in Parliament, when a severe domestic bereavement prevented his further attendance in the House of Commons.[2] But Mr. Gladstone's eloquence had little or no effect on the result. Lord Palmerston met the charge of hurrying the Bill through Parliament with the laughing rejoinder that he was quite ready to sit through September if it was desired to have a full discussion of the details;[3] and, except that the Government consented to one or two amendments, the chief of which excused the clergyman, who conscientiously objected to do so, from celebrating the marriage of a divorced person, the Bill passed through all its stages, and on the 21st of August was returned to the Lords.[4]

[1] 'His sympathies, he himself said, were with Conservatives, his opinions with Liberals.' See Russell's *Gladstone*, p. 130.

[2] Lady Lyttelton, Mrs. Gladstone's sister, died in August 1857. Mr. Morley has a very interesting passage on the Divorce Act of 1857, and on Mr. Gladstone's opposition to it, which is worth referring to. See Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. i. pp. 568–572.

[3] Ashley's *Palmerston*, vol. ii. p. 347.

[4] *Hansard*, vol. cxlvii. p. 1999.

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Even then the measure was not safe. Lord Redesdale, who had been one of its chief opponents, and who, from his position as Chairman of Committees, exercised considerable influence, gave notice on the 20th that when this Bill came—as he understood it would come—from the Commons on the 21st, he should move that the amendments which the Commons had made in it should be taken into consideration on that day six months; and, on the 21st, when the Bill actually reached the Lords, it was evident that the majority of the peers present were on the side of Lord Redesdale, and not on the side of the Bill. Ministers in these circumstances did not venture to ask the House to consider the amendments of the Commons, and Lord Granville simply moved the adjournment of the House till the following Monday, the 24th. Even then, however, it was uncertain whether the Government would be able to secure the attendance of a sufficient number of peers to defeat Lord Redesdale. Fortunately, they were able to do so; and by a very small majority—46 votes to 44—Lord Redesdale's motion was rejected. The amendments of the Lower House were then substantially accepted: the Commons subsequently waived their objection to the slight points on which the peers still insisted, and the Bill became law.[1]

The Bill, which thus became law, transferred the powers of the ecclesiastical courts in divorce cases to a new court, authorised to grant either a divorce (*a vinculo matrimonii*) or a judicial separation (*a mensa et thoro*). In order to diminish the possibility of collusion between the parties, it authorised a public functionary to intervene in the suit subsequent to the decree of the court. The decision of the court was, therefore, a provisional judgment or a decree *nisi*, as the lawyers phrase it, to take effect at a given date if the Queen's Proctor

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlvii. pp. 1885, 1962, 2036, 2088.

did not intervene. It is interesting to note that, after all the heat which had been excited in these debates, the Bill made comparatively slight changes in the practice of Parliament. It only extended to the poor man the relief which Parliament had, for more than two centuries, accorded to the rich one. In doing this, it effected changes in procedure which were plainly desirable. It abolished the grave scandal of actions for criminal conversation; and it got rid of the unfortunate necessity of threshing out the unsavoury details, inseparable from divorce proceedings, before three separate tribunals. No doubt, if it simplified the proceedings in each case, it concurrently increased the number of divorces; but, however much good men may regret that there should be so many instances in which husbands and wives[1] find it necessary to obtain relief from the obligations which they have incurred by marriage, wise men will probably conclude that the use which has been made of the Act is the best proof of its necessity; and that the cause of morality itself is less strained by dissolving than by maintaining a marriage

Its effects.

[1] The relief which was given to the wife was not equal to the relief given to the husband. The husband could obtain divorce on proof of the wife's misconduct. The wife could only gain relief when the misconduct of her husband was coupled with cruelty or desertion. A gradual series of decisions by the Divorce Court has enlarged the definition of cruelty, and the difference between the position of husband and wife, though still great, is less marked than it was in 1857. Those who have read Mr. Hardy's novel, *The Woodlanders*, will recollect that the main interest of that well-told story turns on this distinction in the Act of 1857. The heroine is advised that she cannot obtain release because her husband had not been cruel enough (*Woodlanders*, chap. xxxix.). It is no part of an historian's duty to give an opinion on a matter of law; but thirty or forty years after 1857 the desertion of a wife by her husband for the purpose of living with another woman would, I believe, have been regarded as cruelty entitling a woman to a divorce. In Scotland, it should, perhaps, be added, the wife can obtain a divorce on proof of her husband's infidelity or desertion. In Ireland, on the contrary, divorce is still procurable only through a private Act of Parliament; while, in the little island which is situated between Ireland and England, and where there are traces of both English and Scottish influences in the laws relating to marriage, a judicial separation may be granted by the court; but divorces can be effected only by Act of Tynwald.

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which from the misconduct of one spouse has become insupportable to the other.

The transfer of probate jurisdiction to the new court.

Advantage was taken of the machinery which the Divorce Act instituted to carry another reform. The constitution of a new court, whose president, it was supposed, would hardly have business enough to occupy his whole time, afforded an opportunity of delegating to it other work, for which provision was sorely needed. Up to 1857 the testamentary jurisdiction of the country was in a state of confusion. In case of dispute, all questions relating to real property were decided by the Court of Chancery, but all matters affecting personalty were dealt with by the ecclesiastical courts. 'There were some 400 of these courts,' said the Attorney-General, 'which existed in every corner of the country, and they were so many pitfalls into which the unwary suitor was entrapped, and in which he was entangled.'[1] Cases were not uncommon in which a testator, who died possessed of both real and personal estate, or who had personal estate in two different counties, had been found to be sane in the Court of Chancery, and insane in the Ecclesiastical Court, or sane by a jury in one county, and insane by a jury in the other.[2] For thirty years the attention of Parliament had been drawn to these anomalies; but, though all authorities had agreed that reform was necessary, they had disagreed on the remedy to be applied to it. The Government now proposed, in constituting a new divorce court, to give it jurisdiction in all questions of probate.[3] The proposal, though it led to much debate, was felt to be reasonable, and was adopted by Parliament.

These two measures, useful as they were, deserve to be remembered for another reason. One of them showed the determination of Parliament to substitute

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlvi. p. 454.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 452, 453.
[3] The court was also given jurisdiction in Admiralty cases.

the law of the State for the law of the Church. Both of them were evidence of its resolution to destroy the jurisdiction of the Church, which had come down from the Middle Ages, and to insist that questions of law should in future be decided exclusively by lawyers. Even the men who resisted the measures, and who argued that marriage was indissoluble by the law of God, had not a word to say for the old ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Discussion indeed arose on the propriety of compensating some of the officers of the old courts; but no one had anything to urge for the retention of the courts themselves.

The strength of the Ministry.

The success of the Government in securing the passage of these two measures added to the popularity of Lord Palmerston. His position seemed assured; and his power seemed likely to terminate only with his life. The news from India, which arrived after the commencement of the recess, was, on the whole, favourable. Lucknow was definitely relieved; Delhi was taken; and Lord Palmerston gained the additional popularity which rightly attaches to a Minister who deals boldly and successfully with a grave crisis. The country, moreover, was apparently enjoying a full measure of prosperity; and prosperity naturally indisposes a people to political change. Thus, when Parliament separated in 1857, everything pointed to the stability of the Ministry. Except from the contingencies which seemed inseparable from the age of the Prime Minister, no cloud on the political horizon threatened either ruin or difficulty.

The crisis of 1857 in the United States.

In politics, however, nothing so often happens as the unforeseen, and events were already occurring in the United States which were pregnant with disaster, both to the New and to the Old World. Experience, indeed, had often shown that great apparent prosperity constantly paves the way for grave financial trouble; for, just as action is succeeded by inaction in the world of

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politics, so confidence is followed by distrust in the world of finance. And the reason for this is simple. In periods of confidence men imagine that every fresh undertaking affords a new road to wealth. Dazzled by the prospect of higher rates of interest, they sell their old securities, or borrow money upon them, and invest in new ventures. The inevitable result ensues. Some of the new companies fail; the failure of some of them precipitates the fall of others; and the public, violently vibrating from confidence to distrust, as rapidly as they passed from distrust to confidence, increase the confusion by a vain endeavour to retrieve their own fortunes. Acting, as they have done throughout, without knowledge, perhaps they have no other alternative; but the moral which ought to be drawn from their misadventure is soon forgotten, and the investing public never seems to discern that it is by buying stock when prices are low, and not when prices are high, that fortunes are made.

The crises of 1825, 1836, and 1847 had apparently indicated that periods of distrust are apt to recur at intervals of ten years; or, in other words, that it takes this time to obliterate the memory of one crisis and to induce the speculation which provokes another. The crisis of 1857 may be said, therefore, to have occurred a few months before its normal time. Its advent was undoubtedly accelerated by extraneous circumstances. People in the United States, dazzled by the prospects of railway enterprise, had been constructing railways at a speed for which Europe afforded no parallel.[1] The

[1] Rhodes, *Hist. of the United States*, vol. iii. pp. 24, 53. Nearly 21,000 miles of railway, 'seven-ninths of the total mileage,' were constructed from the 1st of January, 1849, to the 1st of January, 1858. In nine years $700,000,000 was invested in railway construction. The work was done hastily, extravagantly, and badly. Rails of insufficient strength were bought in England, and paid for with bonds, issued at ruinously low rates. Accidents were very numerous. A Southern writer talked of railways that had 'stained their tracks with human blood.' *Ibid.*, p. 24.

savings of the United States were certainly insufficient to supply the additional capital for their construction; but speculators, thinking that they could cut a short road to wealth by the purchase of railway shares, borrowed money wholesale for the purpose. The railways themselves, imitating their example, contracted large debts for the development of their enterprise; and the banks throughout the States, in opposition to the first principle of banking,[1] and encouraged by the existence of an inflated currency, readily made the required advances both to the companies and to individual customers. The whole fabric of society was based on credit. Almost everyone was in debt. 'Our city merchants and bankers,' so wrote a prominent American journalist, 'owe those of Great Britain; the country owes the cities; the farmers owe the merchants; in short, two-thirds of us are in debt.' At last, in August, a great joint-stock company of New York and Cincinnati, which had made large advances for the purposes of railway construction, failed with heavy liabilities. Panic at once ensued. Failures followed panic. The value of money rose to 3, 4, and 5 per cent. a month, or to 60 per cent. a year. The soundest banks were unable to stand the strain; in New York alone, sixty-two out of sixty-three banks suspended payments in cash;[2] great railway companies were forced to confess their inability to meet their liabilities. Almost every institution in the United States was compelled to suspend payment in coin.[3]

The increasing difficulties of the money market at New York attracted little or no attention in London. The existence of a panic in America was known at the com-

[1] The principle that a bank should keep a large percentage of its assets easily realisable or 'liquid.'

[2] *Parl. Papers*, 1858, vol. v. p. vii.

[3] Rhodes, *Hist. of the United States*, vol. iii. pp. 45–52; cf. the columns of the *Times* for September and October 1857, especially the number of the 27th of October.

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mencement of September, and its progress was regularly recorded as mail after mail arrived from the United States.[1] But the very men who communicated the crisis to the public refused to believe in its extension. The 'Times', in its City article of the 24th of September, assured its readers that, though the condition of the markets at New York was 'disastrous,' its news confirmed the impression that there was 'no irremediable unsoundness.' On the 7th of October, when the rate of discount at New York had reached 18 to 24 per cent., it declared that there was room for hope that the difficulty would be surmounted; even on the 27th of October, in announcing the entire suspension of specie payments by the New York and Boston banks, it spoke of it as 'the most satisfactory announcement that could have been looked for.' It waited till the 5th of November, when the directors of the Bank of England were on the eve of raising the rate of discount to 9 per cent., to notice the crisis in its leading columns.

The crisis in England.

The optimism of the City editor of the 'Times' was shared by the public. It gave little or no heed to what was passing on the other side of the Atlantic, and, as Consols gradually drooped in value, strengthened the price by large purchases of stock. Even the ministry, which must have had fuller knowledge, kept a remarkable silence. Lord Palmerston dined with the Lord Mayor at the Guildhall at the inaugural banquet on the 9th of November. A few hours before, the Bank of England had raised its rate of discount to 10 per cent.; yet not a word, either of apprehension or of hope, was expressed at the banquet. The crisis,

[1] See the *Times*, 31st of August, and 7th, 15th, 24th of September. The Select Committee on the Bank Acts gave a review of the financial history for 1847 to 1857, including the causes of the crisis of 1857, which is worth referring to. *Parl. Papers*, 1858, vol. v. p. i.

which was already portending ruin, might have been threatening China instead of London.[1]

The prevailing confidence was the more remarkable because, even before the crisis occurred, the Bank of England was not in a strong position. The mutiny of the sepoy army in India had attracted the stream of gold to the East, which in ordinary years flowed to the West.[2] The paralysis of trade in the United States, and the complete stoppage of specie payments, dried up the supplies which were due from that country, either in return for commodities exported to them, or as dividends on railways or other stocks. The directors of the Bank of England, finding that their reserve was diminishing, raised the rate of discount on the 8th of October from 5½ to 6 per cent.; and, on the 12th of October, as the demand for gold did not diminish, to 7 per cent.; on the 19th, for the same reason, they raised it to 8 per cent., at that time 'the highest known [rate] of modern times.'[3]

The action of the Bank directors arrested for a few days the progress of the crisis. On the 27th of October, however, the Bank of Liverpool, which had extensive dealings with the United States, was forced to close its doors. Its liabilities were understood to amount to 5,000,000*l.*; and in the following week the Bank of England, confronted with this new difficulty, raised its rate to 9 per cent. On the 7th of November the great firm of Dennistoun, which had numerous agencies in Australia and America, failed with liabilities of 2,000,000*l.*; and the Bank was compelled to raise its rate of discount to 10 per cent.

[1] See the *Times*, 7th and 27th of October, and 5th and 10th of November, 1857; cf. *Ann. Register*, 1857, History, p. 199, and Chron., pp. 217, 513. M'Culloch, *Commercial Dictionary*, ad verbum Banking.

[2] In August 1857 the Bank arranged with the East India Company to export 1,000,000*l.* in specie to the East. *Parl. Papers*, 1857–58, vol. v. p. vii.

[3] See the *Times* of the 20th of October.

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The measures which the Bank was thus forced to take in its own interests naturally increased the existing difficulty, and further excited a panic which had arisen with the suddenness of a tornado. The Western Bank of Scotland, an institution closely connected with the American trade, which had been imprudently managed, closed its doors with liabilities of 6,000,000*l.* or 7,000,000*l.* Its fall was followed on the 11th of November by the failure of the City of Glasgow Bank, with liabilities of 6,000,000*l.*, and of Messrs. Sanderson, Sandeman & Co., with liabilities of 5,500,000*l.* The effect of these numerous failures was shown in the heavy consignments of gold to Scotland. Notwithstanding the high rate of discount, 800,000*l.* in sovereigns was sent to Glasgow on the day of these failures.

It was no longer possible to ignore the severity of the crisis. The bullion in the Bank of England had decreased to 6,666,000*l.* Its reserve had shrunk to 1,462,000*l.*; and it was plain that the directors would immediately be compelled, if the law remained unaltered, to refuse the most moderate assistance even to the most solvent firms. In these circumstances the Government, following the precedent of 1847, wrote to the Bank to say that if in the state of commercial discredit and distrust which had arisen, it 'should be unable to meet the demands for discount and advances upon approved securities without exceeding the limits of their circulation prescribed by the Act of 1844, the Government would be prepared to propose to Parliament upon its meeting a Bill of Indemnity for any excess so issued.'[1]

The Bank Act suspended.

The letter, dated on the 12th of November, was not issued too soon. At the close of that day the Bank's reserve was reduced to 581,000*l.* But the remedy,

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlviii. p. 159.

as in 1847, had an almost immediate effect in restoring confidence. The Bank strengthened its reserve by the issue of additional notes to the amount of 2,000,000*l.* About half of these at once passed into the hands of the public. Commercial men, seeing that the Bank was provided with exceptional means for affording assistance in every legitimate case, recovered their equanimity. The termination of the panic decreased the strain, and on Christmas Eve the Bank was enabled to dispense with the exceptional powers with which it had been temporarily invested, and at the same time to reduce the rate of discount to 8 per cent.

But, though in financial circles the storm subsided almost as suddenly as it arose, it left enduring traces behind it of the ruin which it had caused. The receipts at the Exchequer were contracted, the growth of trade was arrested, and the diminished demand for labour swelled the melancholy roll of pauperism. Some men there were who, intent on the consequences of the crisis, and unable to appreciate its causes, were disposed to lay the blame of it on the Act of 1844. They pointed to the fact that the suspension of the provisions of that Act had restored confidence, and they argued that the existence of its provisions had created panic. They neglected to observe, what the President of the United States subsequently acknowledged, that the whole crisis had been due to the over-issue of paper in America; and that the Act of 1844 was the single safeguard against the undue inflation of currency in this country. They failed, moreover, to see that governments, in moments of crisis, may be compelled to suspend laws which, in ordinary times, are salutary and desirable. It is no reflection on the wisdom of our ancestors in framing the Habeas Corpus Act, that their successors have occasionally thought themselves bound to dispense with its security; and similarly, it is not clear that Sir Robert

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Peel was wrong in framing the Act of 1844, because in 1847, in 1857, and in 1866, the Bank of England was temporarily authorised to disregard the law.

Parliament meets.

The course which the Government had taken, in authorising the Bank to disregard the law, compelled it to lose no time in summoning Parliament, and in obtaining a covering authority for its action. The Legislature, which had been prorogued till the 17th of December, was accordingly convened on the 3rd of that month; and the necessary measure, indemnifying the directors of the Bank, was passed. This duty accomplished, the Houses were enabled to separate, and on the 12th were formally adjourned till the 4th of February.

There is, or used to be, a prevalent idea that the exceptional summons of a Parliament for an autumn Session is of evil augury to the stability of a ministry. Men who have been looking forward to the enjoyment of a quiet life in their own homes, naturally dislike the disturbance of their own plans, and the expense of an additional sojourn in London. The country gentleman, about to shoot his coverts, his wife and daughters looking forward to the house party, or perhaps the ball, intended to give more zest to the shooting, are equally annoyed, and equally ready to resent the inconvenience to themselves. Yet, when Parliament was adjourned on the 12th of December, 1857, it was not easy to foresee any combination of events which could disturb Lord Palmerston. His position was perhaps indirectly strengthened by the pleasure of the nation at the marriage, in January 1858, of the Queen's eldest daughter to Prince Frederick William of Prussia. No man in 1858 could foresee the happiness and tragedy of this union: that the young Prince, who was welcomed as a fitting son-in-law for the Queen, was destined to play a striking part in the greatest war of the century, and

The marriage of the Princess Royal.

to succeed on a deathbed, which revealed the true heroism of his character, to the first throne in Continental Europe; and that his young bride, after a life in which storm and calm, cloud and sunshine, were blended, was ultimately to succumb, in patient suffering, to the ravages of the same disease which was to destroy her husband.

Lord Clanricarde appointed Lord Privy Seal.

Yet the days of the Government were already numbered. At the end of 1857, Lord Harrowby, a statesman whose character commanded universal respect, was compelled by the weight of advancing years to resign the office of Lord Privy Seal; and Lord Palmerston replaced him with Lord Clanricarde, the nephew of Mr. Canning, but a man whose character was widely known and as widely regretted. The appointment revolted the public conscience, and undoubtedly did a great deal to shake the Government.[1] But its fall was ostensibly due to another cause. Some obscure Italian conspirators made a horrible attempt on the life of the Emperor Napoleon, and their crime, which, as will be seen in another chapter, ultimately changed the face of Europe, led almost immediately to the fall of Lord Palmerston's Ministry.

The Orsini outrage.

On the evening of the 14th of January, while the Emperor, accompanied by the Empress, was driving

[1] Lord Clanricarde's name had been mixed up in the case of Handcock *v.* Delacour. All that can be said for him will be found in a pamphlet, *An Inquiry into the Truth of the Accusation made against the Marquis of Clanricarde in the Cause of Handcock* v. *Delacour*, London, 1855. The *Times*, writing on the 23rd of February, 1858, said that Lord Clanricarde's appointment, which it called a public scandal, an outrage on public feeling, more than any public measure contributed to his (Lord Palmerston's) overthrow. Mr. Greville wrote at about the same time: 'It is absurd, but nevertheless true, that nothing has damaged Lord Palmerston so much as his making Clanricarde Privy Seal;' and again, 'It will be too absurd if Palmerston, after being the idol of the public, should find himself deserted and his power shaken because he made Clanricarde Privy Seal; but there can be no doubt that this appointment has had more effect than any other cause in the change of public opinion about him.' *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. pp. 157, 161; cf. Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. ii. pp. 275, 276.

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to the opera, some Italians, of whom Orsini was the chief, threw some bombs under the Imperial carriage. Their explosion wrecked the vehicle, seriously injured the horses, killed or wounded some 156 persons who happened to be either in attendance or in the street, but by a remarkable chance inflicted no injury on either the Emperor or Empress. It was unhappily proved that the conspiracy had been formed in England, that the bombs with which the attempt was made had been manufactured in England, and that Orsini himself had reached France with an English passport, made out in an English name. It was not unnatural, when these facts were known, that Frenchmen should protest with some indignation that England, in nominally rendering an asylum to the unfortunate, was in reality affording protection to criminals; and Count Walewski,[1] who was Foreign Minister of France, and united by ties of blood to the Emperor, addressed a despatch to this country in which he called on the British Government to assist him in arresting the danger to which France is exposed by the conduct 'of those demagogues who violate the right of asylum, by affording us a guarantee of security which no State can refuse to a neighbouring State, and which we are authorised to expect from an ally.' Count Walewski said in this despatch: 'It was in England that Pianori formed the plan of striking the Emperor; it was from London that, in an affair the recollection of which is still recent, Mazzini, Ledru Rollin, and Campanella directed the assassins whom they had furnished with arms. It is there also that the authors of the last plot have leisurely prepared their means of action, have studied and constructed the instruments of destruction which they have employed;

Count Walewski's despatch.

[1] Count Walewski was well known in England. Oddly enough, he had come there originally as an emissary of the Polish Association. See the *Times'* leading article, 6th of January, 1860.

and it is from thence that they set out to carry their plans into execution. . . . It is no longer the hostility of misguided individuals, manifesting itself by all the excesses of the press and all the violences of language; it is no longer even the work of the factious seeking to rouse opinion and to provoke disorder; it is assassination, elevated to doctrine, preached openly, practised in repeated attempts, the most recent of which has struck Europe into amazement. Ought, then, the right of asylum to protect such a state of things? Is hospitality due to assassins? Ought the English legislation to continue to favour their designs and their plans? And can it continue to shelter persons who, by these flagrant acts, place themselves beyond the pale of common right and under the ban of humanity?'[1]

These expressions were unusually strong. Much, however, could be forgiven in a despatch written within a week of an outrage which had aroused the sympathies of an entire continent. Lord Clarendon, when the French Ambassador read it to him on the 21st of January, replied that, while 'no consideration on earth would induce Parliament to pass a measure for the extradition of political refugees,' it required 'no impulse from without to set in motion the law as it stood, provided [there was] evidence to go upon.' He added that 'it was a question whether the law was as complete and as stringent as it might be, but that the whole subject had been referred to the law officers of the Crown,' and that he had himself the day before written to the Attorney-General requesting 'an early opinion.'[2]

Lord Clarendon, however, having had this conversation with M. de Persigny, thought it, on the whole, wiser and more courteous to send no formal answer to the despatch. He could not, as an honest man, tell Count

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1857–58, vol. lx. p. 113. Cf. *Hansard*, vol. cxlviii. p. 1752, and vol. cxlix. pp. 59–62.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 57.

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Walewski that he 'was mistaken,[1] or that assassination was not openly preached in this country by the class of persons indicated in his despatch. . . . We could not without disrespect towards Parliament, for which we should have been justly blamed, say that any measure for the greater punishment of such offences should be adopted. We could not even engage that such a measure should be submitted to the consideration of Parliament, for we did not then know whether the law officers might not report against any alteration of the existing law. In short, we could have written nothing at that time which would not have invited a rejoinder.' Instead, therefore, of at once officially answering Count Walewski's despatch, Lord Clarendon contented himself by writing privately[2] to Lord Cowley, the British Ambassador at Paris; and even in this private letter he dwelt more strongly on the difficulties of the British Government than on the charges which had been brought against it by Count Walewski.

Most people will think that Lord Clarendon judged wrongly. Charges such as those brought by Count Walewski in writing, require an answer in writing; and an effective reply might have been prepared by a man with less skill and fewer resources than those with which Lord Clarendon was provided.[3] If, however, Count Walewski's despatch had stood alone, the fact that it had remained unanswered might have escaped attention. But unfortunately it did not stand alone.

[1] See Lord Clarendon's speech, *ibid.*, p. 62.

[2] De la Gorce, in the *Hist. du Second Empire*, treats Lord Clarendon's private letter as a despatch. Vol. ii. p. 242 and note. For Lord Clarendon's private letters to Lord Cowley, see *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. p. 65.

[3] It is understood that Sir Richard Mayne, the Chief Commissioner of Police in London, warned the Préfet de Police in Paris of Orsini's having left England with the intention of going by way of Belgium to Paris, and there attempting the Emperor's life. Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. i. p. 232. Lord Clarendon might easily have urged the fact that this warning was given as a proof that the English police had done much to prevent the outrage.

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The Duc de Morny, the half-brother of the Emperor, publicly asked how it was that neighbouring and friendly governments were powerless to destroy the laboratories of assassins. Other men, less highly placed than M. de Morny, used even more indecent language. Addresses naturally flowed from the French army to the Emperor congratulating him on his escape. Many of these addresses, prepared and signed by the colonel of each regiment, were couched in language to which no exception could be taken. Some of them, however, were marked by phrases which neither loyalty to the Emperor nor indignation at the attempt on his life could justify. They spoke of England and of London as an assassins' den (*ce repaire d'assassins*). They asked that the infamous den should be destroyed for ever: they invited the Emperor to give them the order to destroy it. These addresses were given what a French historian has called the most regrettable importance by their publication in the 'Moniteur.'[1] The language of the French press stimulated the passions which they excited. The English press not unnaturally retorted with equal heat; and the animosity excited on both sides the Channel was so great that Mr. Disraeli, a few months afterwards, in speaking to his constituents, declared that peace had been a question not of weeks or of days, but of hours.[2]

The Conspiracy to Murder Bill.

In the excitement which was thus created, Parliament resumed its labours; and, on the 8th of February, Lord Palmerston introduced a short Bill making a con-

[1] De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. ii. p. 225.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 232, 243–245; *Selected Speeches of the Earl of Beaconsfield*, vol. ii. p. 459. The speech naturally attracted a great deal of notice, and attention was formally directed to it by Lord J. Russell in the House of Commons on the 28th of May, by Lord Clarendon in the House of Lords on the 1st of June, 1858, and by Lord Palmerston on the 31st of May. Lord Palmerston declared Mr. Disraeli's statement to be actually the opposite of the truth. *Hansard*, vol. cl. p. 1206.

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spiracy to commit murder either within or without the United Kingdom a felony punishable by imprisonment for life. In introducing the Bill, he was able to say that the attention of the French Government had been drawn to the indecent language of some of the addresses which had been published in the 'Moniteur,' and that the French Ambassador had placed in Lord Clarendon's hands a despatch in which Count Walewski had pleaded that these addresses had been published through inadvertence, and had added that 'he was ordered, on the part of the Emperor, to state that he regretted their publication.'[1] This apology smoothed the way for the preliminary reception of the measure. Mr. Kinglake, indeed, who had already shown that he was no friend to the Emperor Napoleon, asked the House to refuse consideration to it till Count Walewski's despatch was answered; but the House, moved by the moderate character of the Bill and the explanation of the Emperor, declined to accept the advice, and after two nights' debate passed the first reading of the Bill by a large majority.[2]

The measure which was thus introduced, besides removing a doubt 'whether a conspiracy by aliens in this country to murder another alien in a foreign country was an offence punishable by our laws,'[3] assimilated the law in Ireland to the law in Great Britain. In Ireland, a conspiracy to commit murder was a capital offence: in Great Britain it was a misdemeanour punishable by a short period of imprisonment. The Bill proposed to assimilate the law in the two countries, and make in each the offence a felony, punishable by penal servitude for life, or imprisonment for a shorter period.[4] The Bill, therefore, proposed to

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlviii. p. 936.
[2] 299 votes to 99. *Ibid.*, p. 1078.
[3] The words are Sir George Grey's, the Secretary for the Home Department. *Hansard*, vol. cxlviii. p. 998.
[4] The text of the Bill is in *Hansard*, vol. cxlviii. p. 937.

diminish the penalty in Ireland, and to increase the penalty in Great Britain. To the alteration of the Irish law, no real objection was made. To the alteration of the English law, it was objected that the whole course of criminal legislation during the preceding thirty or forty years had been directed to the reduction of punishments; and that experience had proved that lesser punishments had increased the chances of conviction, and had consequently discouraged instead of encouraging the commission of crime. Why, then, it was argued, should the House of Commons reverse a policy which experience had shown to be wise, because a foreign power asked us to alter our laws?[1] *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari*[2]—such had been the reply of our ancestors centuries ago. Why now should we be willing to change our laws at the dictation of a foreign potentate?

Thus, though the Government had secured a majority of nearly 3 to 1, the tone of the debate had not been entirely in its favour. The House was evidently sore at the neglect to answer Count Walewski's despatch and at the language of the French colonels. The tone of the House was reflected in the tone of the people out of doors. The public denounced the Bill because it was introduced, as they thought, at French dictation. They denounced the Government because it had not officially replied to the despatch of a foreign power.

This dislike was at once manifest when, on the 19th of February, the debate on the second reading of the Bill took place. Mr. Milner Gibson, who had lost his seat at Manchester in the previous year, in the general massacre of the free traders, but who had since been

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlviii. p. 957, and see Lord J. Russell's speech, *ibid.*, p. 1039.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 982.

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returned by the borough of Ashton-under-Lyne, proposed an amendment expressing horror at the attempt on the Emperor's life, readiness to remedy any defect in the criminal law which had been proved, after due investigation, to exist, but regret that the Government had not thought it their duty to reply to Count Walewski's despatch before attempting to alter the law of conspiracy. The motion was at once seconded by Mr. Bright, who had shared Mr. Milner Gibson's defeat at Manchester, but who had since been returned by the great borough of Birmingham,[1] and, after a debate which extended over two nights, was carried by a majority of 19.[2]

Lord Palmerston defeated.

Few divisions which have determined the fate of a ministry, perhaps no division of equal importance, has attracted fewer members.[3] The fate of the Minister who, a few months before, had been confirmed in power by an overwhelming majority at the polls, was decided in a House from which nearly one member out of every three members was absent. Lord Palmerston owed his defeat to the absence of his friends, and not to the presence of his opponents. Yet that defeat was obviously procured by the same combination which had led to the dissolution of 1857. It was the union of the Conservatives with the free traders under Mr. Bright, with discontented Whigs like Lord John Russell, and with men still hesitating on their future like Mr. Gladstone, that composed the majority of 1858, as it had composed the majority of 1857. But the reasons,

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlviii. pp. 1741, 1758.

[2] By 234 votes to 215. *Ibid.*, p. 1843. According to Mr. Greville, Lord Eversley, the late Speaker, thought that the Speaker should have declined to put Mr. Milner Gibson's amendment as inadmissible. 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 169. It is hazardous to dissent from so high an authority as Lord Eversley; but it is difficult to see how, under the then practice of Parliament, the Speaker could rightly have taken this course.

[3] The fate of Lord John Russell's Ministry in 1852 was decided in a House of only 265 members. *Hist. of England*, vol. v. p. 449, note.

which had induced the country to reverse the decision of the House in 1857, made it hopeless to expect that it would reverse the vote of 1858; for, in 1857, Lord Palmerston had been confirmed in power because the country recognised that, rightly or wrongly, he was maintaining the honour of England, while, in 1858, it almost unanimously considered that he was lowering the credit of the nation by yielding to the demands of France.

Small as the House was which passed the decisive vote, ready as it might have been to afford the Minister a way of escape by passing a vote of confidence, the Cabinet at once decided to resign office. Two reasons, which had nothing to do with the fateful division, influenced its decision. It avoided, in the first place, by its resignation, a debate on Lord Clanricarde's appointment, on which it was almost certain that it would have encountered a second defeat; and, in the next place, its temporary retirement, so it was hoped, might afford an opportunity for recombining the discordant sections of the Liberal party either under Lord Palmerston himself or under some other chief.

Though, then, the Queen hesitated, in the first instance, to accept the resignation of her Minister, and though her hesitation was justified by the advice of Lord Derby, who begged her to take twenty-four hours for consideration before definitely charging him with the formation of a new Government,[1] Lord Palmerston and his colleagues adhered to their decision, and Lord Derby had no alternative but to comply with the Queen's commands, and for the second time undertake the conduct of a Government in a hostile House of Commons. The personnel of the new Cabinet was arranged without much difficulty. Lord Derby in the

Lord Derby's second Ministry.

[1] Ashley's *Palmerston*, vol. ii. p. 356; Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 190; *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. p. 24.

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first instance endeavoured to avail himself of the services of some of the men who stood outside both the great parties of the State, and applied for assistance to Mr. Gladstone, the Duke of Newcastle, and Lord Grey. 'They did not, however, think it consistent with their position to render' him the aid which he required;[1] and the new Minister was consequently forced to confine himself to the narrow circle of his immediate supporters. Lord Derby himself became First Lord of the Treasury; Mr. Disraeli resumed the lead of the House of Commons as Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord Malmesbury, Lord John Manners, Mr. Spencer Walpole, and Mr. Henley returned to the offices which they had held in 1852. Sir F. Thesiger, who became Lord Chelmsford, was made Lord Chancellor. Two other appointments excited more interest. Lord Derby's eldest son, Lord Stanley, who, though young in years, was already displaying prudence and ability, was sent with universal approval to the Colonial Office; Lord Ellenborough, the brilliant orator, who had been recalled from the Governor-Generalship of India in 1844, assumed the duties of the Board of Control.

The new Ministry was respectable both from the ability and the character of the majority of its members; it was weak from the circumstance that it reflected neither the views of the House nor those of the country. It was to the interest of all parties, however, that it should not be immediately disturbed, and that time should be suffered to elapse before it should be ejected from the power with which it had been temporarily entrusted. Yet it was not quite clear that it would be possible to extend to it this measure of grace. Critical

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. p. 25; and cf. Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. i. p. 577. Mr. Gladstone refused Lord Derby's offer, but a little later on consented to accept a commission to proceed to the Ionian Islands to examine into the grievances and aspirations of the population of the islands; see *supra*, p. 14, note.

questions, on which it might be unable to command a majority, stood before it. How was the new Ministry to compose the differences with France? How was it to provide for the future government of India? How was it to meet the demands on the public purse? How, finally, was it to deal with the question of reform? These and other questions had to be answered. Was it possible for a ministry, in a minority in the Commons, to devise adequate solutions for them?

The reconciliation with France.

It is a pleasure to an English writer to acknowledge that the differences with France were composed mainly by the moderation of her Emperor and of his Minister, Count Walewski. Few ministers, who have ever held the French Foreign Office, have ever inspired or deserved greater confidence in this country. Lord Clarendon said of him that, in all his relations with him, Count Walewski had never told him an untruth.[1] But, much as M. Walewski did to maintain the friendship of two great nations, he never worked more persistently with this object than in 1858. He had already expressed regret that his despatch of the 20th of January had been misunderstood in this country. In a despatch of the 11th of March he avowed that the object of the Emperor was to preserve the alliance, and that if it were to be preserved the honour of one nation must never be sacrificed to the honour of the other. 'My despatch of the 20th of January,' added the Minister, 'had no other object than to stigmatise a state of things which was to be regretted. [But] as the intentions of the Emperor have been misapprehended, his Majesty's Government will abstain from continuing a discussion which, by being prolonged, might prejudice the dignity and the good understanding of the two countries; it appeals purely and simply to the loyalty of the

[1] De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. ii. pp. 245, 246; *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. p. 166. Martin's *Life of Prince Consort*, vol. iii. p. 113.

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English people.' In presenting the despatch to Parliament, Lord Malmesbury took occasion to acknowledge 'the frank and handsome' conduct of the French Minister, and expressed a natural satisfaction at the termination of 'all the misapprehensions which unfortunately existed for a short time between the two countries.'[1]

The trial of Dr. Bernard.

Yet the incident was not wholly terminated. Among the men with whom Orsini had been in communication in England was a Frenchman named Bernard, who had begun life as a surgeon in the French navy, who had long been distinguished for his revolutionary opinions, and who had been the associate and friend of Orsini in London. It was found that Bernard had received the bombs which Orsini had ordered in Birmingham; that he had taken an active part in transmitting them to Brussels; that he had purchased from some wholesale chemists in London the ingredients from which the explosives with which they were charged had been made; that he had been in possession of two of the revolvers with which the assassins were armed on the occasion of their attempt; that he had transmitted these revolvers to a commission agent in Paris, and subsequently desired the agent to deliver them to Orsini; that he himself had taken an active part in hiring Rudio, one of the assassins, and that he had obtained for him a passport under a false name. These facts were so serious that the Government, which originally decided on indicting Dr. Bernard for a conspiracy to murder, ultimately determined to charge him with murder.[2] The facts which have thus been stated were not disputed at the trial. Bernard's counsel, indeed, frankly avowed the part which Bernard had taken in purchasing the bombs, the

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1857-58, vol. lx. p. 125, and *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. p. 166.

[2] The original decision was taken by the law officers of Lord Palmerston's Government. The

ingredients for explosives, the pistols, and in engaging Rudio; but he insisted that there was no evidence that the bombs which Orsini used were those which Bernard had received, and he contended that Bernard had been preparing for an *émeute* in Italy, and that he had no cognisance of the crime which it was intended to commit in Paris. These arguments, however ingenious, do not merit much attention. The Lord Chief Justice, who presided over the Special Commission before whom Bernard was tried, considered that 'the evidence was overwhelming to establish the complicity of the accused;'[1] and if Mr. Edwin James, who represented the prisoner, had had nothing but these technical arguments to rely on, a conviction would almost certainly have been obtained. But Mr. Edwin James knew his business too well to rely on technical arguments of this character. He relied on the excitement which the French colonels' addresses had produced, and he appealed throughout his speech—not to the reason, but to the passions of the jury. The prosecution, he declared, had been directed by foreign dictation to bring about a state of subserviency to a foreign Government. He closed his address with an impassioned appeal to the jury to tell the French Emperor that he cannot intimidate an English jury; and, amid applause so general that the judge was unable to check it, the jury responded to the appeal by acquitting the prisoner. The verdict of the jury—the scandalous verdict, as a French historian has not unfairly called it—was the answer of twelve plain Englishmen to the addresses of

His acquittal.

graver charge was brought by the law officers of Lord Derby's Government. An Englishman, named Battie, was killed in the attempt on the Emperor's life, and Bernard was charged with the murder of Battie. There was some question whether a Frenchman could be indicted in this country for the murder of an Englishman abroad; but I have excluded these technical questions from the text. *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. pp. 1485–1491.

[1] *Life of Lord Campbell*, vol. ii. p. 358.

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the French colonels.[1] A witty American authoress has declared a jury to be 'the cussedness of one man multiplied by twelve.' If she had been aware of the verdict in the Bernard case, she might have cited it in confirmation of her dictum.

The verdict, however, happily did not increase the irritation between two great countries. On the day on which it was pronounced, M. de Persigny was replaced in the French Embassy in London by Marshal Pélissier, the Duc de Malakoff. No choice could have been happier. No one in France represented so well as the Duke the most glorious days of the alliance of this country with France. His valour and conduct in the Crimea had won the hearts of our soldiers, and the stories of it insured him a warm reception from the British nation. The fact that the old Marshal was married to a young and good-looking Frenchwoman added a new interest to his presence. Warmly received from the first moment of his arrival, entertained at dinner by the Senior United Service Club, the Marshal was touched by the warmth of his reception. He became the lion of the season. The foolish language of the French colonels was forgotten in the presence of the rough but genial old Marshal and his pretty wife; and a crisis which had destroyed a ministry, and threatened the peace of the world, was happily forgotten.

[1] There is a short but sufficient account of the trial in *Ann. Reg.*, 1858, Chron., pp. 310, 329; cf. the reports in the newspapers of the day; De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. ii. p. 247; *Life of Prince Consort*, vol. iv. pp. 213, 216.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER II.

CHINA AND JAPAN.

Lord Elgin in China.

Lord Elgin was instructed to catch at Suez the mail which left England on the 26th of April, 1857, and to proceed, either by the mail or a special steamer, to Singapore, where he would find the Shannon ready to take him to Hong Kong. At Singapore he would overtake a force of 1,500 artillery and infantry, intended to reinforce the 5th Foot, sent from the Mauritius, and 350 Native Indian troops, already despatched from Singapore to China. He was given a wide discretion as to the commencement of hostilities; but he was told, as far as possible, to co-operate with the representatives of France and the United States, countries which had grievances of their own to redress, the chief of these being the cruel murder of a French missionary, M. Chapdelaine. The French, moreover, thought, so we are assured by a French historian, that they were bound to join in the expedition, to prevent all the advantages of the war falling into the lap of England (De la Gorce, 'Hist. du Second Empire,' vol. iii. p. 240). If Lord Elgin failed to obtain satisfaction by pacific measures, he was told to proceed to the mouth of the Peiho with as large a naval force as could be spared from Canton, and intimate to the Court of Pekin his 'readiness to meet a suitable plenipotentiary, named by the Emperor of China, for the purpose of settling all matters of dispute between the two countries' (Correspondence relating to the Earl of Elgin's Special Mission to China and Japan, 1857, 1859, 'Parliamentary Papers,' 1859, Session 2, vol. xxxiii. p. 2). If a plenipotentiary were appointed to meet him, he was to demand: 1. The reparation of injuries to British subjects, and, if he were co-operating

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with France, of those to French subjects also; 2. The complete execution at Canton of the stipulations of the several treaties; 3. Compensation to British subjects for losses in the late disturbances; 4. The assent of the Chinese Government to the residence of an accredited British Minister at Pekin; 5. A revision of treaties for the purpose of obtaining increased commercial facilities. If the Chinese Government refused to assent to the first three of these demands, he was to consider himself justified in resorting to measures of coercion. Coercion might be applied in seven ways: 1. A blockade of Peiho; 2. An occupation of the entrance of the Grand Canal in the Yang-tze-kiang River; 3. An occupation of the island of Chusan; 4. A blockade of Chapoo and other Chinese ports; 5. The interruption of the passage of the Grand Canal where it crosses the Whangho River; 6. The occupation of the heights above Canton; 7. The establishment of a British force in the upper part of Canton city. Lord Elgin reached Singapore on the 3rd of June, and found there a letter from Lord Canning telling him of the mutiny of the native army at Meerut and Delhi, and begging him to divert to India the troops intended for service in China. Lord Elgin acceded to Lord Canning's application, anticipating by doing so directions to that effect which were subsequently sent to him from home (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 7, 8). He arrived, therefore, in Hong Kong at the end of June without the force which had been allotted to him for the purposes of his mission. On the other hand, it must be recollected that, though the diversion of this force crippled his power in China, it afforded a most seasonable reinforcement to the Government of India in the crisis of the mutiny.[1]

On his arrival at Hong Kong, Lord Elgin found that

[1] 'Tell Lord Elgin,' wrote Sir William Peel, the heroic leader of the celebrated Naval Brigade, 'that it was the Chinese expedition that relieved Lucknow, relieved Cawnpore, and fought the battle of the 6th of December.' Waldron's *Life of Lord Elgin*, p. 188.

the operations at Canton had been so far successful that he would be justified in detaching a considerable naval force from Canton to proceed with him to the Peiho. Sir Michael Seymour, however, the admiral in command, strongly protested against the expediency of this course, urging the 'opinion universally prevalent among the British' that the Canton difficulty was a local difficulty which should be settled at Canton itself. But, as both in Sir Michael Seymour's and in General Ashburnham's opinion, a force of 4,000 or 5,000 men would be necessary for an effective attack on Canton, it was plain that the diversion of the reinforcements to India had made it necessary to postpone any such operations, and had left Lord Elgin the alternative of proceeding to the Peiho, or of doing nothing (*ibid.*, p. 20); and accordingly, on the 9th of July, one week after his arrival at Hong Kong, he leaned strongly to the opinion that he should carry out his original instructions and proceed to the Peiho (*ibid.*, p. 22).

It was already evident, however, to Lord Elgin's mind that negotiation alone, unaccompanied by a display of force, would be ineffectual; and he was already turning to the representatives of France and the United States to ascertain how far he could rely on their co operation. The representative of the United States, while expressing his desire for concurrent action, regretted that he had received no instructions from his Government, and naturally professed his inability to move without orders (*ibid.*, p. 17). The representative of France informed Lord Elgin that his Government had arrived at the conclusion that it must be represented in the forthcoming negotiations by an officer of high rank, and that it had selected Baron Gros for the purpose. The existing representative of France, therefore, concluded, much to his regret, that he had no right to take any active step in the interval before Baron Gros's

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arrival (*ibid.*, p. 16). The French Admiral, to whom Lord Elgin subsequently appealed, equally considered it his duty to do nothing till Baron Gros arrived, and Baron Gros, even if special steps were taken to accelerate his coming, could not be expected before the end of September (*ibid.*, pp. 24, 25).

Lord Elgin had now a very difficult question to determine. It was obvious that, if he was to obtain the co-operation of France, he must postpone for some months his journey to the Peiho. If, on the contrary, he went with a British squadron only, he could not doubt that he should increase the chances of receiving 'a rude repulse.' There might have been a time when a rude repulse would not have been the worst of all possible issues that could have followed a first appeal to the Emperor of China; but 'a rude repulse' would be intolerable in its consequences if it were not promptly followed by other measures. We could not afford to quarrel with the Emperor unless we were prepared to strike a blow; and the diversion of the reinforcements to India had made such a blow impossible. The more, therefore, Lord Elgin contemplated the problem, the more he felt satisfied that his hands were tied till Lord Canning could return to him the loan of the troops which he had diverted for service in India. On the 14th of July, however, he received letters from Lord Canning, which, so far from holding out any prospect of help from India, urged him to send to India every man he could spare. The key of the situation seemed, in consequence, transferred from Hong Kong to Calcutta; and Lord Elgin determined, instead of going to the Peiho to negotiate with Pekin, to proceed himself to the Hooghly to confer with Lord Canning (*ibid.*, p. 26). He was able to take with him a naval brigade, which he placed at Lord Canning's disposal, which, in the future, did good service on

Lord Elgin proceeds to Calcutta.

many a hard-fought field, and whose commander, Captain, afterwards Sir William, Peel, unfortunately died, a soldier's death, in the campaign.

He returns to China.

Lord Elgin reached Calcutta in August, and returned to Hong Kong in September, 1857. Except that Sir Michael Seymour had undertaken the blockade of Canton, he found that affairs in China wore much the same aspect as when he had left in July. The reasons which had deterred him from going to the Peiho remained in full force. He had still no troops to punish any repulse which he might receive from Pekin; Baron Gros was still on his way out, and in his absence Lord Elgin could not rely on the co-operation of France (*ibid.*, p. 41). If it were necessary to wait in July, it seemed equally necessary to mark time in September. At last, in November, Baron Gros reached China and had several conferences with Lord Elgin. The two plenipotentiaries agreed in regarding the expedition to the Peiho as abandoned for the present year. The French plenipotentiary decided on directing the French Admiral to join Sir Michael Seymour in the blockade of Canton, and that operations at Canton should be pressed with a view to enforcing the surrender of that important city (*ibid.*, pp. 77–81).

In accordance with this decision, in the middle of December, the British and French forces took possession of Honan Point, at the mouth of the Canton River (*ibid.*, p. 102). On the 29th of that month the heights above the city were taken (General van Straubenzee reported this capture on the 28th, but the 29th appears to have been the real date; *ibid.*, pp. 134, 135), and in the beginning of January the city itself was occupied, and the Imperial Minister, Yeh, taken prisoner (*ibid.*, p. 137). On the 10th of February, the blockade of the port was suspended, and commerce resumed (*ibid.*, p. 179), and on the 22nd, with the concurrence of

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Baron Gros, Yeh was sent for safe keeping to Calcutta (*ibid.*, pp. 213, 214; cf. Oliphant's 'Lord Elgin in China and Japan,' vol. i. pp. 120–184).

The capture of Canton closed the first chapter in the Chinese drama. Canton was far from Pekin, and the victory of 'the Barbarians' over Yeh was not likely to disturb the serene atmosphere of the Imperial Court. It was obviously necessary to exert some further pressure at the head quarters of the Empire; and, on the 11th of February, Lord Elgin decided on sending his private secretary, Mr. Oliphant, to Shanghai with a letter to the Prime Minister of China. The Prime Minister was invited in this letter to send some suitable plenipotentiary to Shanghai before the end of March to negotiate on the several subjects at issue; and he was distinctly told that, if no fully accredited plenipotentiary reached Shanghai before that time, more active measures would at once be taken. Mr. Oliphant was accompanied by a French officer, the bearer of a similar demand from Baron Gros, and he was supported by notes from the representatives of the United States and Russia (*ibid.*, pp. 184–188, and 'Parl. Papers,' 1859, vol. xxxiii. p. 228).

Lord Elgin formulates his demand.

The Prime Minister of China did not think fit to send a direct reply to Lord Elgin. He told the Governors of Two-Kiang and Kiang-Su, through whose agency he had received Lord Elgin's ultimatum, that there was a particular sphere of duty allotted to every official on the establishment of the Celestial Empire, and that he would compromise the dignity of his sovereign if he were to correspond direct with Lord Elgin. He desired, therefore, the Governors of Two-Kiang and Kiang-Su themselves to reply to the British demands. Lord Elgin was, of course, unable to respect the Prime Minister's susceptibilities on this point; he insisted on receiving a direct reply from the Prime

Minister himself (*ibid.*, p. 257), and decided on at once proceeding to the Gulf of Pecheli, in company with the representatives of France, Russia, and the United States, and to commence the negotiations at the mouth of the Peiho (*ibid.*, p. 261). On the 24th of April he sent a further letter to the Prime Minister from the mouth of the Peiho, requesting that a duly accredited minister should meet him at Takoo before the end of the month (*ibid.*, p. 266). A commissioner duly arrived, but his powers were found to be incomplete; and, in concert with his allies, Lord Elgin decided to move up the Peiho from Takoo to Tientsin, demanding, or securing, the surrender of the forts at the mouth of the river[1] (*ibid.*, pp. 305–307). As the Imperial commissioner returned no answer to the demand for their surrender, the forts were attacked on the 20th of May, and were taken after a sharp engagement (*ibid.*, p. 310). On the 30th the allied squadrons, with the plenipotentiaries of the four powers on board, moved up to Tientsin (*ibid.*, p. 312). This success quickened the pace of the Chinese Government, and at last, on the 26th of June, Lord Elgin was able to sign a treaty in which China conceded all the points on which he had been instructed to insist. Baron Gros concluded a treaty with the Imperial commissioner on the following day (De la Gorce, 'Hist. du Second Empire,' vol. iii. p. 241). The Russian envoy, who had not taken part in, but who had not opposed, the measures of coercion which France and England had applied, had concluded an arrange-

The attack on the Takoo forts.

[1] Some controversy subsequently arose, into which it is unnecessary to enter here, on the question whether Lord Elgin had received adequate support during the course of the operations in China from Sir M. Seymour, who commanded the naval forces in the Far East. The question was originally raised by a passage in Mr. Laurence Oliphant's *History of Lord Elgin's Mission*, chap. xiii.; but it was carried in to Parliament, where the two men had seats in the different Houses. For Sir M. Seymour's side see *Hansard*, vol. clvi. pp. 919, 936; for Lord Elgin's reply, *ibid.*, p. 1461; and for Sir M. Seymour's subsequent explanation, *ibid.*, pp. 1708, 1714–1717.

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ment with China eleven days before ('Parl. Papers,' 1859, vol. xxxiii. pp. 332 and 345); the plenipotentiary of the United States eight days before (*ibid.*, p. 393). (For a detailed account of Lord Elgin's treaty, see Oliphant's 'Lord Elgin in China and Japan,' vol. i. p. 422, and Appendix No. I.; and Waldron's 'Life of Lord Elgin,' p. 254.) Lord Elgin occupied the remainder of the year in negotiating the new tariff under the treaty, in visiting Japan, in arranging a special commercial treaty with the Japanese Court, and in a remarkable journey up the Yang-tze-Kiang to Hankow, the details of which are of great interest, though they can hardly be included appropriately in this narrative. ('Parl. Papers,' 1859, vol. xxxiii. p. 440.) Lord Elgin returned to Shanghai in the middle of January. In his own language, 'Uninvited, and by methods not always of the gentlest, [he had] broken down the barriers behind which these ancient nations [had] sought to conceal from the world without the mysteries, perhaps also, in the case of China at least, the rags and rottenness, of their waning civilisations.' He added on the same occasion, 'Neither our own consciences nor the judgment of mankind will acquit us if, when we are asked to what use we have turned our opportunities, we can only say that we have filled our pockets from among the ruins which we have found or made.' (See his reply to an address from the Shanghai merchants, *ibid.*, p. 458.) Lord Elgin reached England, after a year's absence, on the 19th of May, 1859, and with his return another act in the Chinese drama appeared to have been effectually closed by his resolution and discretion.

Lord Elgin returns home.

The ways of the Celestial Empire are, however, tortuous. By the 56th article of Lord Elgin's treaty of Tientsin, it was provided that the ratifications of the treaty should be exchanged at Pekin within a year

from the date of signature; and, in June 1859, Mr. Bruce, Lord Elgin's brother, who was appointed British plenipotentiary in China, in company with his French colleague, attempted to proceed up the Peiho for that purpose. The squadrons, on which they were embarked, were fired on by the Chinese, and, after a sharp engagement, were compelled to retire. An attempt to take the forts by landing a storming party was attended with even more disastrous results; and we had to confess to a loss of three gunboats, and of more than 400 men killed and wounded ('Ann. Reg.,' 1859, Hist., p. 260). There was a debate on Mr. Bruce's conduct in these transactions, on the 13th of February, 1860 ('Hansard,' vol. clvi. pp. 919–952; see also *ibid.*, vol. clvii. pp. 781, 788, 795, 803).

The repulse on the Peiho.

This reverse was doubly unfortunate. In the first place, it involved a serious loss of British lives and of British prestige; and, in the next place, it encouraged the Chinese Court to further acts of resistance. The British ministry, indeed, which was now represented at the Foreign Office by Lord John Russell, who had so vigorously denounced Lord Palmerston's policy in 1857, in the first instance clung to the hope that the Emperor of China might have the good sense to yield without further hostilities. On finding, however, that there was no prospect of such a solution of the crisis, it decided on again applying to Lord Elgin, and on asking him, in conjunction with Baron Gros, to undertake a fresh mission to China. Lord Elgin was to insist on three things: (1) An apology for the attack on the allied forces at the Peiho; (2) the ratification and execution of the treaty of Tientsin; and (3) the payment of an indemnity for the expenses of naval and military preparations. In securing these objects Lord Elgin was wisely allowed the wide discretion which his conduct in the previous year had shown that he was so competent

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to exercise (Correspondence relating to Affairs in China, 1859–60, 'Parliamentary Papers,' 1861, vol. lxvi. pp. 29, 30). A considerable force was placed at his disposal to insure success for his mission; and Sir Hope Grant, who had rendered good service and achieved high reputation during the mutiny in India, was appointed to the command of the troops employed on it. The command of the French expedition, consisting of 8,000 picked troops, was given to General Montauban, an officer who had gained some experience in Algeria (De la Gorce, 'Histoire du Second Empire,' vol. iii. p. 245).

Lord Elgin's second mission.

In their passage out the two plenipotentiaries experienced an unfortunate accident, which in another age might have been regarded as of fatal augury. The English frigate, the Malabar, on which they were passengers, ran on a reef at Point de Galle, in Ceylon, and was lost. The two ambassadors were with some difficulty rescued ('Ann. Reg.,' 1860, Hist., p. 259). Undeterred, however, by this misadventure, the plenipotentiaries proceeded to China, and in the middle of July 1859 found themselves in the Gulf of Pecheli. The English forces, under Admiral Hope and Sir Hope Grant, were stationed at Talienwan—a place which, forty years later, was to acquire a greater importance—Admiral Hope having ascertained that the harbours of Wei-hai-Wei and Chefoo—places destined to become also familiar—were inconvenient and unsafe, and that Wei-hai-Wei was especially unsuitable from an entire absence of fresh water [1] (Correspondence relating to China, 'Parl.

[1] It may be worth while to quote Admiral Hope's exact words: 'On my way up I visited the harbours of Wei-hai-Wei and Chefoo, and satisfied myself that in no respect would they have proved sufficient in size to hold a fleet of this description, with any regard to convenience, or even safety, in bad weather. The entire absence of fresh water at the former, and the scanty supply at the latter, of these harbours, barely sufficient for the use of the French expedition, would, even if the case had been otherwise, have placed them entirely out of the question as

Papers,' 1861, vol. lxvi. p. 85). The French fleet was at Chefoo. At the end of July the two fleets met at the mouth of the Pehtang River; and on the 1st of August a force of 2,500 French and 2,500 British soldiers was disembarked, and occupied the town of Pehtang. On the 21st of August the allied forces succeeded in capturing the whole of the forts commanding the Peiho, and in opening the river as far as Tientsin; 500 guns were taken in these forts (*ibid.*, p. 128). Tientsin was itself occupied before the end of the month (*ibid.*, p. 149).

The Chinese authorities, while these operations were going on, had made repeated appeals to Lord Elgin to stop them; but, as they gave no assurance that the demands of the allies would be complied with, Lord Elgin steadily refused to arrest the movement of the armies. After the capture of Tientsin, new commissioners—appointed from Pekin—conveyed to Lord Elgin the most positive assurance that the treaty of 1858 should be faithfully observed, and the other demands of the British Government conceded (*ibid.*, p. 152); but as, on receiving from Lord Elgin the draft of the treaty necessary to give effect to these assurances, they professed their inability to sign it until it had been approved by the Chinese Emperor, Lord Elgin, with the concurrence of Baron Gros, decided to advance on Pekin, and to enter into no further negotiations until he reached Tungchow (*ibid.*, p. 156), a place situate only twelve miles from the capital (*ibid.*, p. 161).

This decision induced the Chinese to moderate their tone. In language 'more modest' than that which they had previously used, they expressed a strong hope that the allied armies would not advance beyond Hosewoo; and, as Lord Elgin, after consulting Sir

a rendezvous for the fleet.' It is odd that this report apparently should have been overlooked thirty-nine years afterwards.

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Hope Grant, found that an advance on Tungchow could not be undertaken for some days, he told the Chinese authorities that if they gave him securities for their good conduct, he would halt the army within easy distance from Tungchow, and proceed thither, with an escort of only 1,000 men, for the signature of the convention, and similarly to Pekin for the exchange of the ratifications of the treaty of Tientsin (p. 164).

In accordance with this arrangement, on the 17th of September the allied armies set out from Hosewoo for a camping ground twenty-two miles off and five miles from Tungchow. Mr. Parkes, with some English and French officers, preceded the army in order to make the necessary arrangements for the requirements of the forces. Nothing of importance occurred on the first day's march; but, on resuming the route on the 18th, Sir Hope Grant was surprised to see a large Tartar army drawn up to dispute his progress (p. 176). As Mr. Parkes and British and French officers were in the Tartar lines, Sir Hope Grant hesitated to engage the enemy, and contented himself for the moment with concentrating his forces. In the meanwhile Mr. Parkes, unable to obtain any explanation from the Tartar general of this hostile movement, rode on through the Chinese lines to Tungchow to remonstrate with the Chinese commissioners, sending Mr. Loch, Lord Elgin's private secretary, back to the British camp to state what he was doing, and leaving Colonel Walker, Commissary-General Thompson, and a small escort in the Chinese lines to await his return. Mr. Parkes was accompanied in his adventurous ride by Mr. de Norman, an attaché to the Legation, and by Mr. Bowlby, a correspondent of the 'Times.' He was subsequently joined by Mr. Loch, who was sent back with orders from Sir Hope Grant, and by Captain Brabazon, of the Royal Artillery, who volunteered to accompany Mr. Loch ('Ann. Reg.,' 1860, Hist., p. 265).

The capture of Mr. Parkes and others by the Chinese.

In the meanwhile the allied forces continued their concentration, but abstained from any active hostilities. Suddenly, however, a commotion was observed in the Chinese lines, and Colonel Walker and his small escort dashed out of their ranks. Colonel Walker reported that, while he was waiting for Mr. Parkes, a French officer, who accompanied him, was suddenly attacked and cut down by a Chinese soldier. On Colonel Walker riding up to prevent the murder of his comrade, some Chinese snatched his sword from his scabbard and tried to throw him from his horse. Seeing that it was a deliberate attempt to assassinate the whole of them, Colonel Walker set spurs to his horse, and galloped out with his party under the fire of the Chinese line. The little party managed to reach the British lines in safety, though Mr. Thompson and one of the escort were wounded (*ibid.*, p. 266. I have given the account almost in Sir Hope Grant's words).

Sir Hope Grant now saw that further delay was impossible. The Chinese army had commenced the attack, and common prudence required that the blow should be at once returned. The order to attack was accordingly given. The French were directed to turn the enemy's left, the British to charge them in front. The movement succeeded admirably, the Tartars being completely routed with great loss, and the allied armies occupied the town of Chang-kia-wan (Correspondence relating to China, 'Parl. Papers,' 1861, vol. lxvi. p. 176). On the following day, a further battle was fought: the entrenched camp of the enemy was captured, and the head quarters of the allied armies were advanced beyond Tungchow. On the 5th of October the advance was continued, and on the 6th 'the main body of the British force was encamped on the north face' of Pekin, and 'the French army with the British cavalry at the summer palace of the Emperor' (*ibid.*, p. 178).

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In a military sense, complete success had rewarded the exertions of the allies; yet, on personal grounds, Lord Elgin was racked with anxieties. British subjects, men who had stood by him during the whole of these complicated negotiations, members of his own staff among them, were in captivity, and their fate was uncertain. The Chinese, who were now represented by the Prince of Kung, a brother of the Emperor, urged him to fall back, and all would be well. Lord Elgin knew, however, that the Chinese were the last persons to run away from, and he even doubted whether the chance in favour of the prisoners would be improved if he showed any disposition to retreat. He accordingly told the Prince that, unless the prisoners were immediately restored, Pekin would be stormed; and his courage was rewarded on the 9th by the release of Mr. Parkes, Mr. Loch, M. d'Escayrac de Lauture, a French gentleman of science, and five other prisoners. The fate of Mr. de Norman, Mr. Bowlby, Lieutenant Anderson, and nineteen troopers, who, it was ascertained, were not at Pekin, was still uncertain (*ibid.*, pp. 188, 189). Nine of these men were released on the 13th, but they unfortunately had to report that their commander, Lieutenant Anderson, Mr. de Norman, and three others, had succumbed under the hardships of their imprisonment (*ibid.*, p. 197). On the day on which they were released the allied armies entered Pekin (*ibid.*, p. 196).

The release of the prisoners.

The war was now practically over. The Chinese had no alternative but to accept the terms which were offered to them; and in addition Lord Elgin decided to mark his sense of the cruelty inflicted on British subjects by the destruction of the summer palace of the Emperor, and by the exaction of a further sum of 300,000 taels to compensate the prisoners or their families for their sufferings. On the 24th of October the

convention was signed, and on the same day the ratifications of the treaty of Tientsin were exchanged (*ibid.*, p. 219).

Only a few remarks need be added to this bare narrative of facts; for the thrilling story of the sufferings of the prisoners may be read in the narrative which they sent to their chief at the time, or in the little book which Mr. Loch subsequently published. Their countrymen have a right to be proud of the courage and endurance which they displayed in their captivity. Mr. Parkes refused release, which was offered him, unless he was accompanied by Mr. Loch ('Ann. Reg.,' 1860, Hist., p. 268; Mr. Loch's 'Narrative,' 'Parl. Papers,' 1861, vol. lxvi. p. 194). Mr. Loch, in the midst of his torture, encouraged an old Sikh sowar: 'I told him not to fear, we were in God's hands.' 'Ah, Sahib!' he said, 'I do not fear. I am sixty; if I do not die to-day, I may to-morrow, and I am with you. I do not fear' (Mr. Loch's 'Narrative' in *ibid.*, p. 192). For those of them who died, the Russian Ambassador, General Ignatieff, offered a resting place in the Russian cemetery at Pekin. The bodies of Mr. de Norman, Lieutenant Anderson, Mr. Bowlby, and of one English soldier, lie there, where, as General Ignatieff promised, 'les tombes des quatre Anglais qui gisent bien loin de leur patrie seront religieusement gardées par notre Mission Ecclésiastique avec les mêmes soins que celle-ci attache à la conservation des siennes' (*ibid.*, p. 211).

The results of the war.

The main results of the war may be summed up in Lord John Russell's language to Lord Elgin. 'The convention which you concluded with the Prince of Kung on the 24th of October is entirely satisfactory to her Majesty's Government. It records the reparation made by the Emperor of China for his disregard in the previous year of his treaty engagement; it sets her Majesty's Government free from an implied engagement

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not to insist in all particulars on the fulfilment of these engagements; it imposes upon China a fine in the shape of an augmented rate of indemnity; it affords an additional opening for British trade; it places on a recognised footing the emigration of Chinese coolies, whose services are so important to her Majesty's colonial possessions; it relieves her Majesty's colony of Hong Kong from a source of previous annoyance; and it provides for bringing generally to the knowledge of the Chinese the engagements into which the Emperor has entered towards Great Britain. These are all solid and real advantages, and, coupled with the provisions of the treaty of Tientsin, they will, it may be hoped, place the relations between the two countries on a sound footing, and insure the continuance of peace for a long period to come' (*ibid.*, p. 252).[1]

Perhaps the most important article in this treaty in its ulterior consequences was neither that which insisted on the observance of previous engagements, nor that which doubled the indemnity imposed by the treaty of Tientsin, but that which placed on a recognised footing the emigration of Chinese coolies. However reluctant the Chinese may have been to open up their country to foreign trade, they showed every disposition to carry their own labour to foreign markets. Their presence in the United States and in our own colonies seemed likely at one time to produce grave inconveniences; and the spread of the yellow race suggested to a philosophic historian the anticipation that power itself would pass, and was passing, from the white man. It is unnecessary in this place to criticise the conclusions at which Mr. Pearson arrived. The moral which he drew in 'National Life and Character'

[1] The text of the treaty will be found in *Parl. Papers*, 1861, vol. lxvi. p. 285. There is an abstract of it in *Ann. Reg.*, 1860, Hist., p. 270; the treaty which the French concluded at the same time in *Parl. Papers*, 1861, vol. lxvi. p. 223.

had perhaps been anticipated by a learned foreign statesman, who declared that Lord Palmerston thought that he had opened China to Europe, but that he had made a mistake: he had let out the Chinese.

The narrative in this appendix is mainly composed from the official papers published in this country. A very full account of the expedition, written from a French standpoint, will be found in De la Gorce's 'Hist. du Second Empire,' vol. iii. pp. 235–296. M. de la Gorce has drawn rather a striking contrast between Baron Gros —'fort avancé en âge et avide de repos [incliné] à restreindre l'entreprise bien plus qu'à la mener à fond'— and Lord Elgin, 'aussi dispos de corps que d'esprit, prêt à accompagner l'armée à cheval et presque à la devancer' (p. 251), and he evidently thinks that the policy of the two countries was reflected in the character of their respective ambassadors (p. 290). He has defended, however, the burning of the summer palace by Lord Elgin. It is amusing to find that General Montauban declared that the defeat, on the 21st of September, of a vast horde of Asiatics by a little body of European troops was so strange, that to understand our success you must go back into the history of the ancient world and recall the constant victory of a handful of Roman troops over the hordes of the barbarians (*ibid.*, p. 277). General Montauban had evidently no knowledge of what the English had accomplished in India, and the Spaniards in Mexico and Peru. There was a very temperate debate on our whole Chinese policy in the House of Lords on the 19th of February, 1861 ('Hansard,' vol. clxi. p. 546). The two sides of the question are stated by Lord Grey and Lord Wodehouse (better known afterwards as Lord Kimberley).

One other result, perhaps attended with more lasting consequences than the residence of a British Minister

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at Pekin, or the emigration of labourers from China, ensued from Lord Elgin's mission; for, in the interval between the conclusion of the treaty of 1858 and his expedition up the Yang-tze-kiang, Lord Elgin found time to visit Japan, and his short visit was attended with momentous consequences to the world.

Lord Elgin in Japan.

Japan, at that time, was almost unknown to Western civilisation. 'The distance,' wrote Mr. Oliphant, who accompanied Lord Elgin, 'from Shanghai to Nagasaki is not above 450 miles; but, if oceans rolled between the two empires, Japan could not be more thoroughly isolated than it is from the rest of the world.'[1] It had 'ever been veiled in the mystery of a jealous and rigid seclusion.'[2] Though Japan had been the theatre of some of Xavier's most successful exertions as a missionary; though the Portuguese for three centuries before the time of Lord Elgin had established some colonies on the Japanese coasts, of which Nagasaki was the most important; though the Dutch had followed the Portuguese at the end of the sixteenth century; and though an English factory had been planted on the shores of the Empire in the reign of James I.; no permanent results had followed from either missionary effort or commercial enterprise. Christianity, which had spread rapidly in the first instance, had been crushed out by massacre; the English factory had existed only for a short period of ten years; the Portuguese had disappeared, or rather been expelled, from the Empire; and, though the Dutch still held their ground, they were practically prisoners, and could not even console themselves with the profits of a lucrative trade for the ignominy with which they were treated.[3]

To the ordinary Englishman, Japan was almost as

[1] Oliphant, *Lord Elgin in China and Japan*, vol. ii. p. 1.
[2] *Life of Lord Elgin*, p. 260.
[3] Oliphant, *Lord Elgin in China and Japan*, vol. ii. pp. 23–50.

inaccessible as Mecca. 'Its history, its scenery, its people were unknown. British traders, who carried their wares to almost every market which civilisation or barbarism could supply, neglected Japan. Asia was full of mysteries; her vast expanse of unexplored territory had many secrets securely veiled from European eyes; but there was no Asiatic mystery so secret as that which, in 1858, enveloped Japan.

Four years, indeed, before Lord Elgin's visit, a British Admiral, Sir Charles Stirling, who commanded the naval forces in the Far East, had concluded, in somewhat memorable circumstances, a convention with the Japanese. War had broken out between Russia and England, and Sir Charles imagined that a Russian squadron might possibly have repaired to some Japanese port, or, at any rate, might make use of Japanese resources and harbours for equipping cruisers or sheltering prizes. Sir Charles accordingly, in August 1854, sailed for Nagasaki. He found that the bird which he sought had spread its wings and flown in the previous April; but Sir Charles told the Japanese authorities that, while the war lasted, he might have frequent occasion to return and renew his search, and that it would therefore be convenient to him to be informed of 'the views and intentions of the Japanese Government with respect to the admission into its ports of the ships of war of the belligerent parties in the present contest.'[1]

The communications which were thus opened between the Governor of Nagasaki and Sir Charles Stirling, and which were conducted by Sir Charles with admirable 'tact and judgment,'[2] ultimately led to the conclusion of a convention between the Admiral on one side and some Japanese commissioners on the other.

[1] *State Papers*, vol. xlvi. p. 711.

[2] The praise is the praise of the Foreign Office. *Ibid.*, p. 718. But a perusal of the correspondence will show that it was thoroughly deserved.

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Under this convention far greater concessions were obtained than were required for the purposes of the Russian War. Two ports, Nagasaki and Hakodadi, were opened to British ships for repairs or for necessary supplies; other Japanese ports were opened to vessels in distress; and British ships and subjects were secured 'an equality of advantage with the ships and subjects of other nations.'[1]

Interesting as this convention was, it was attended with few results. The men, who governed England at the time that it was made, had not the imagination necessary for even attempting to forecast the future of Japan. Twelve years, indeed, elapsed before a traveller, with eyes in his head, predicted that, in the brilliant future which he foresaw for the Pacific, either Japan or Vancouver, jutting out into the ocean from Asia or America, would occupy the position which England, jutting out from Europe, had attained in the Old World.[2] In 1856, Vancouver, still under the Hudson's Bay Company, was not included by statisticians in the British Empire;[3] and Japan, which, before the close of the century, was to become one of the great powers of the world, was still shrouded by a veil, which Lord Elgin himself only partially uplifted.

He concludes a Treaty.

Lord Elgin had no formal credentials on his visit to Japan; but he took with him a steam yacht, the Emperor, which he had to present to the Tycoon as a gift from her Majesty. A great English journal subsequently made itself merry over the present; for, as the Tycoon was never allowed to leave his palace, her Majesty's present was about the only thing which could by no possibility be of any use to him.[4] It gave Lord

[1] This article, however, did not extend to British subjects the nominal advantages conceded to the Dutch and the Chinese. The convention is printed in *State Papers*, vol. xliv. p. 62; and with a convenient exposition in *ibid.*, vol. xlvi. p. 726.

[2] Sir Charles Dilke, *Greater Britain*, p. 281.

[3] See *ante*, chap. i.

[4] *Times*, 1st of November, 1858.

Elgin, however, an excuse for going himself to Yeddo. There he succeeded in negotiating a treaty with the Japanese, giving the British Government power to send a diplomatic agent to Yeddo, and consuls to the open ports, opening to British subjects at specified periods the chief ports and cities in Japan, empowering British subjects to trade directly with the Japanese; and admitting foreign coin to circulate in Japan, making it interchangeable weight for weight with Japanese coin of the same description.

The news of this treaty would, in any case, have excited keen interest in England; but the accounts which Lord Elgin and his staff brought home of the country and of its inhabitants, the beauty of its scenery, the intelligence and courtesy of its people, increased the curiosity. Mr. Oliphant, indeed, whose well-known book was published almost immediately after his return to England, described Japan as a Utopia. He confessed that he found it 'difficult to avoid presenting a too highly coloured picture. The contrast with China was so striking, the evidences of a high state of civilisation so unexpected, the circumstances of our visit were so full of novelty and interest, that we abandoned ourselves to the excitement and enthusiasm they produced. There exists not a single disagreeable association to cloud our reminiscences of that delightful country. Each day gave us fresh proofs of the amiable and generous character of the people among whom we were.'[2] But Mr. Laurence Oliphant's enthusiasm was shared by his graver chief. 'On the whole,' he wrote, 'I consider [this] the most interesting expedition I ever made. The total absence of anything like want among the people;

His admiration of the Japanese.

[1] An abstract of the treaty will be found in *Life of Lord Elgin*, p. 273. The treaty itself in *Oliphant*, vol. ii. p. 482; and in *State Papers*, vol. xlviii. p. 28. Yeddo, since 1867, has been known as Tokio. The Americans had made a treaty with the Tycoon shortly before Lord Elgin's arrival.

[2] *Lord Elgin in China and Japan*, vol. ii. p. 51.

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their joyous, though polite and respectful, demeanour; the combination of that sort of neatness and finish, which we attain in England by the expenditure of great wealth, with tropical luxuriance, made me feel that at last I had found something which entirely surpassed all the expectations I had formed; and I am bound to say that the social and moral condition of Japan has astonished me quite as much as its material beauty. . . . There is no luxury or extravagance in any class; no jewels or gold ornaments even at Court; but the nobles have handsome palaces and large bodies of retainers. A perfectly paternal government; a perfectly filial people; a community entirely self-supporting; peace within and without; no want; no ill-will among classes. This is what I find in Japan in the year 1858, after one hundred years' exclusion of foreign trade and foreigners. Twenty years hence, what will be the contrast?' 'God grant,' so he wrote in another place, 'that in opening up their country to the West, we may not be bringing upon them misery and ruin.'[1]

Perhaps even now it is too soon to decide whether the Japanese, as a race, have had their happiness increased by closer communication with the Western world. In the ten years which succeeded Lord Elgin's visit, a large party in Japan resented the intrusion of foreigners, and Englishmen were unfortunately murdered, and the operations of English trade impeded by passive resistance and active violence. In 1864 measures which bore a close resemblance to the operations of war became, or were thought to have become, necessary. But from 1868, when a revolution transferred the authority from the Tycoon to the Mikado, Japan again became the Utopia for the traveller which Lord Elgin and Mr. Oliphant had found it. Whatever other results, however, ensued from the events of 1868,

[1] *Life of Lord Elgin*, pp. 265, 269, 271.

Japan passed through a period of development which had never been seen before in the history of the world. In the space of forty years she achieved a progress which it had taken centuries for European nations to accomplish. At a time when the future fortunes of mankind seemed to have definitely passed into the keeping of the white races, she revealed to mankind the spectacle of a yellow race bidding for supremacy in the Pacific. In the course of a single generation, a people, previously unknown and unvisited, became one of the eight great powers of the world.

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CHAPTER III.

THE RETURN OF LORD PALMERSTON TO POWER.

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1858. The position of Lord Derby in 1858.

It is the theory of party government, that the ministry of the day reflects the opinion of the majority of the House of Commons. Occasionally, however, either the will of the Sovereign, or the defeat on a particular question of a minister with a majority ordinarily at his disposal, has led to a practice inconsistent with this theory. Thus Mr. Pitt in 1783, and Sir Robert Peel in 1834, undertook the responsibilities of office with the knowledge that the existing House of Commons was opposed to their policy. In the one case, the Minister, defeated over and over again in the House, was able to reverse the sentence of the electors' representatives by appealing to the constituencies themselves; in the other, the Minister, unable to obtain sufficient support in the country, was compelled to abandon the task which he had chivalrously attempted.

Lord Derby, however, affords the only instance of a statesman who, on three occasions, has attempted to carry on the work of government with only a minority of the House of Commons to support him. In 1852, the collapse of the Liberal Administration, which resulted from the dismissal of Lord Palmerston, imposed on him this task; in 1866, the death of Lord Palmerston, and the defeat of Lord Russell's Reform Bill, again forced him to take office; and in 1858, the period at which this History has now arrived, the defeat of Lord Palmerston on the Conspiracy Bill left him hardly any

alternative but to obey the Queen's commands, and to undertake the duty of attempting to carry on the government of the country.

It would be ungenerous not to acknowledge that, on each occasion, Lord Derby and his colleagues were able to achieve a certain measure of success. They conducted the work of administration with skill, and they placed measures of importance on the Statute-book. But it would, at the same time, be folly to ignore the fact that the experiment in each case proved that an administration which has not a majority at its back can neither enforce its principles nor sustain its credit. Instead of steering direct to the port to which it would go, it has to trim its sails to catch any favourable gusts which may reach it from any point of the political compass, and which may save it from drifting on to the rocks of destruction.

In forming his second Government, Lord Derby was well aware of the difficulties which were inevitably associated with his enterprise. He professed, indeed, to be overwhelmed with a sense of their magnitude.[1] And this profession was not the diffident expression of a statesman suddenly called to high office. It obviously pointed to the circumstances under which his Administration was formed. Both Lord Palmerston's promises and the country's expectations compelled Lord Derby to deal with two subjects—the future government of India and parliamentary reform—which, if he had been supported by a majority, he would have declined to touch. In opposition, indeed, he had argued that, while India was in a state of revolt, it was not expedient to divert attention from military measures to 'the constitution of the executive Administration at home.' In office, he was forced to acknowledge that the contrary decision of the House

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. p. 23.

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of Commons had compelled him to reconsider this opinion, and that the Government was already framing a new India Bill.[1] Again, in his private capacity, he thought that the Reform Act of 1832, 'with all its anomalies and all its imperfections, [had] given the country [an adequate] representative system.' Yet, in his official capacity, he admitted that the expectation of the people and the promises of successive Governments imposed on him the duty of attempting to deal with the question of parliamentary reform.[2] Thus, at the very outset of his Administration, his weakness in the House of Commons compelled him to discard his old opinions. Difficult as his task was, it was obviously hopeless if he did not bring himself to some extent into line with the views of his opponents.

The Government of India.

So far as parliamentary reform was concerned, some delay was possible. No one could be so unreasonable as to suppose that a new Government, unexpectedly introduced to power, could be ready to deal at a moment's notice with so difficult and complicated a subject. On this point, therefore, there was no expectation that the Government would be prepared with a measure during the current Session. The other question, however, did not admit of similar delay. The Bill of Lord Palmerston's Government for regulating the future government of India had actually been introduced, it had made some progress, and Lord Derby and his colleagues had at once to consider whether they would take up that Bill or replace it with another.

Lord Palmerston's Bill.

The change which Lord Palmerston had proposed to make may be concisely stated. He had desired to transfer the political functions of the old East India Company, which since 1784 had, to some extent, been supervised by the Board of Control, to a president and council of eight members appointed directly by the

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. p. 40. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

Crown. The president was to be a member of the Government of the day, and the organ of the Cabinet on all matters relating to India; the council was to be composed of persons who had either been directors of the Company, or who had served in India either in a civil or military capacity, or who had resided there for a certain number of years. The council was to hold office for eight years, one-fourth of its number retiring by rotation at the close of every second year. The decision of the president was, in nearly every case, to be final; but the members of the council, if they differed from their chief, were to have the right of recording their own opinions on the minutes. On financial questions, however, the council was to exercise a direct power of control, and the president was not to act without the concurrence of at least four of its members. The army of the East India Company was to be transferred to the Crown, but the conditions of service were not to be altered by the transfer; and the soldiers were to be entitled to claim their discharge if they objected to the change. The Civil Service of India was to be recruited, as it had been recruited during the preceding five years, by open competition; but cadetships, the patronage of which had been divided between the Board of Directors and the President of the Board of Control, were in future to be filled up alternately by the president and his council, a certain number of them being reserved for the sons of civil and military officers who had served in India.[1]

Mr. Stuart Mill's apology for the Company.

The proposal—or rather the knowledge that some such proposal would be made—naturally aroused the opposition of the old East India Company; and the Company, which in the hour of its trial had the advantage of numbering great men among its servants, entrusted its defence to a man who holds the chief

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlviii. pp. 1276–1292; see especially pp. 1284–1287.

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place among the economists of the nineteenth century, and who produced an apology for his employers which takes high rank among the great State papers of the world. The petition, which Mr. J. S. Mill drew up for presentation to Parliament, was based on the broad facts that the old Company had acquired and maintained an empire without cost to the Crown; that it had established in India a government which had not only been one of the purest in intention, but one of the most beneficent in act, ever known among mankind; and that it had done its duty to the public at home and to the people of India. Mr. J. S. Mill declined to believe that any party could contemplate vesting the home portion of the government in a minister of the Crown unassisted by an experienced council; and he proceeded to argue that no new council could have the authority which antiquity and history gave to the directors. A council nominated by the Crown, many of its members owing their position to the individual minister whom it was their duty to control, could never act with the independence of a body in whose selection the Crown had exercised no preponderating voice;[1] and the existing system, under which despatches were drafted by the directors and revised by the President of the Board of Control, was more calculated to produce real efficiency than a new system under which despatches would be framed by a minister and revised by the council, for 'the mind is called into far more vigorous action by being required to propose than by merely being called on to assent.' It was equally unwise, so the petition contended, to limit the number of the council. Even the present board of eighteen members did 'not contain all the varieties of knowledge and experience desirable in such a body.'

Such were some of the arguments of this remark-

[1] Since 1853 one-third of the directors had been nominated by the Crown.

able State paper. It will be seen that it advocated that the council should be large instead of small, that it should be independent instead of owing its origin to the Crown, that it should be an initiating and not a mere controlling body. The arguments which ran through the petition were naturally re-echoed in debate, and may be found restated in the discussion of the petition in the House of Lords and in the debate on the first reading of Lord Palmerston's Bill in the House of Commons. Whatever effect, however, the arguments of the petition may have had on men's minds, they produced little or no impression on the votes of Lord Palmerston's supporters, and the motion for the first reading of the India Bill was carried by a very large majority.[1]

Lord Derby's India Bill.

On the very day, which succeeded this victory, Lord Palmerston's defeat on the Conspiracy Bill involved his resignation. His successors, in dealing with the government of India, decided on paying more deference to the arguments contained in the petition. In framing a new Bill, they were influenced by the reasoning of that document. Like Lord Palmerston, they determined to transfer the government of India from the Company to a parliamentary minister assisted by a council; they decided that the high functionary who was to preside over the council should 'occupy the rank and fulfil the duties of a Secretary of State.' It was, however, in the constitution of the council, and not in the title of its chief, that the true difference between the two measures was to be discovered. In Lord Palmerston's Bill the council was to consist of only eight persons, appointed by the Crown; in Lord Derby's Bill the council was enlarged to eighteen members, half of whom

[1] The petition is reprinted *in extenso* in *Hansard*, vol. cxlviii., Appendix. The debate in the Lords, which was raised in the Company's favour by Lord Grey on presenting the petition, will be found in *ibid.*, pp. 1121-1164; the debate in the Commons, on the first reading of Lord Palmerston's Bill, in *ibid.*, pp. 1276, 1372, 1607; the division in *ibid.*, p. 1715.

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were to be nominated by the Crown from persons who had experience in India, and the other half of whom were to be elected. Four of the elected members were to be chosen by a constituency consisting of persons who had served in India for a certain time, or who held a certain amount of Indian stock. The other five were to be chosen by five great commercial communities: the city of London, the city of Manchester, the town of Liverpool, the city of Glasgow, and the town of Belfast.[1]

The objections to it.

It is difficult to understand how any body of intelligent men could have either constructed or approved so fantastic a scheme. It did not meet the objections of those of their number who thought that the Bill of their predecessors was 'an act of spoliation.'[2] It only partially met the argument of the East India Company, that the council should be independent, since a moiety of its members were to owe their appointments to the Crown. Nor was it easy to imagine a worse system of election than that which was contemplated by the Bill. There was no obvious ground for entrusting five great cities with the task of choosing a large section of the governing body of India; and it was almost certain that the men on whom their choice fell would be inclined to pay more attention to the commercial interests of the United Kingdom than the social interests of the Indian people. There was something even more grotesque in the proposal that another section of the council should be elected by old Indian officials and by Indian stockholders. A constituency composed of such materials would necessarily have neither cohesion nor policy: its existence might possibly give a spurious value to Indian securities, as some persons might be induced to buy them for the sake of the vote which they carried, just as some persons are ready to subscribe to

[1] See Mr. Disraeli's speech in *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. pp. 818–825.

[2] Lord Malmesbury's opinion. *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 416.

certain charities for the sake of having a voice in the election of those entitled to benefit from their funds. Men of sense, indeed, at once protested against these strange provisions. The Prince Consort showed his usual perspicacity by urging the Government to reconsider them before their publication.[1] Mr. Bright, after their production, declared that 'the proposition that four or five large constituencies should elect those councillors savoured of what was generally called clap-trap.'[2] It would have been difficult to find two persons representing more opposite poles of thought in 1858 than the Prince Consort and Mr. Bright, and it is only strange that objections which occurred to everyone outside the Cabinet should not have prevented the Cabinet itself from putting forward an inadmissible proposal.

Lord Ellenborough's character.

It was, however, the misfortune of Lord Derby in 1858 that he had entrusted the Board of Control, and in consequence the preparation of the new India Bill, to a statesman whose judgment was as defective as his abilities were brilliant. In one sense, indeed, Lord Ellenborough had especial qualifications for the task which was allotted to him. He was one of the first public men in England to perceive the necessity of transferring the government of India to the Crown; and he was one of the few leaders of his party who was not prepared to defend the old Court of Directors. These views left him free to frame a rational measure. But Lord Ellenborough was one of those men in whom intellectual brilliance is marred by defective judgment, and whose overweening confidence in their own powers prevents them from either courting or accepting the criticisms of others. He was thus led to frame the whimsical scheme which his colleagues agreed to accept from him, but which it was soon plain had no chance of

[1] *Life of Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 201.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. p. 844.

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acceptance from anyone else.[1] It looked very much as if the new Government would be overwhelmed by the universal contempt with which their chief legislative measure was received.

If the Liberal party had been a united body, such a result would in all probability have ensued. But the Liberal party in 1858 was in a state of disorganisation. Lord Palmerston was at enmity with Lord John Russell; Lord John was jealous of Lord Palmerston; and the Radicals had little love for either leader. The confusion in the Liberal ranks was increased by the strange unpopularity in which Lord Palmerston was suddenly involved. The man who in 1857 had achieved an unexampled personal triumph had become in 1858 'an object of bitter aversion' to his former followers and adherents.[2] Many of these men desired to prevent his return to power; many others wished to find some means of reconciling the competing claims of Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell; but all of them saw clearly that, until these differences were healed, it was undesirable to eject the new Ministry from the offices to which they had so lately succeeded.

Lord John Russell's proposal.

In these circumstances some expedient had to be found for defeating the Bill without destroying the Ministry. The experience of Lord John Russell devised a suitable arrangement. He suggested to the House, immediately after the Easter recess, that a measure of such magnitude, which it was desirable to remove from the conflict of party, could be more conveniently discussed if the principles on which it was to be founded were first laid down in resolutions settled in committee. Mr. Disraeli at once accepted a proposal which gave him a chance of extricating himself from an embarrassing position, and even sug-

[1] *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 182. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 199.

gested that there would be advantage if the resolutions were framed by so eminent an authority as Lord John himself. This suggestion, however, was at once rejected by Lord John Russell, and by the House, which rightly insisted that the responsibility of initiation must rest with the Executive Government; and after a short discussion Mr. Disraeli accordingly undertook to frame the necessary resolutions, and to bring them before the House in a fortnight's time.[1]

The resolutions.

In the resolutions which the Government thus framed, some deference was shown to the objections which their original proposal had elicited. The House was invited to affirm that (1) the government of India should be transferred to the Crown;[2] (2) that the powers of the East India Company and of the Court of Directors should, in future, be exercised by a Secretary of State;[3] (3) that the creation of an additional Secretary of State should be authorised for the purpose; (4) that the Secretary of State should be assisted by a council of not less than twelve and not more than eighteen members;[4] (5) that the majority of members of the council should have served in India for a term of years to be fixed by the statute;[5] (6) that the council should be partly nominated by the Crown and partly elected;[6] and (7) that the elected members should be chosen by the holders of Indian stock and by persons who had served in India.[7] The first five of these resolutions were adopted, after some debate, without much alteration. The House, indeed, preferred to substitute the words 'a responsible minister of the Crown' for a Secretary of State;[8] to fix the number of the council at not less than twelve and not more than fifteen;[9] and to enlarge

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. pp. 858–877.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 2047.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 2177.
[4] *Ibid.*, vol. cl. p. 318.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 1989.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 2018.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 2036.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 317.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 1988.

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the qualification of the councillors by making residence as well as service in India a qualification for office.[1] But the real division of opinion arose on the last two resolutions. The sense of the House seemed on the whole to be in favour of making the council partly elective; but it obviously regarded with great disfavour the curious constituency which the Government had suggested, and it ultimately evaded the proposition, and directed that a Bill should be introduced in conformity with the resolutions that had already been carried.[2]

The Oudh proclamation.

Before this decision had been arrived at, a wholly unexpected event had shaken the Ministry to its foundations, and involved the resignation of the member of the Cabinet primarily responsible for the affairs of India. In March, Lord Canning sent home a draft proclamation, which reached London on the 12th of April, in which he proposed to declare to the people of Oudh that, with certain exceptions, 'the proprietary right in the soil of the province is confiscated to the British Government, which will dispose of that right in such manner as it may deem fitting.' To those chiefs who made immediate submission, Lord Canning promised that their lives and honour should be safe; but he added that, for any further indulgence, they must throw themselves on the justice and mercy of the British Government. When Lord Canning sent this proclamation home, he was not aware of the fall of Lord Palmerston's Administration; and in a private letter to Mr. Vernon Smith, who he assumed was still President of the Board of Control, he said that he had intended to accompany the proclamation with an explanatory despatch, but that his time had been so fully occupied that he had been prevented doing

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cl. p. 1990.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 2251, and see Report of Resolutions, *ibid.*, p. 2253.

so.[1] Unfortunately—to use the mildest epithet which it is possible to employ—Mr. Vernon Smith neglected to communicate this private letter to Lord Ellenborough. His omission to do so did not justify Lord Ellenborough in condemning a document which he only imperfectly understood. He might have assumed that Lord Canning —whose conduct had gained him the nickname of 'Clemency' Canning—was not likely to err on the side of severity; and he might, at any rate, have concluded that an agent at a distance from London, if called on to deal with a crisis of unexampled magnitude, should be heard in his defence before he was condemned. If generosity to Lord Canning were required by the ordinary rules of conduct, it might specially have been expected from Lord Ellenborough. For Lord Ellenborough had held the same high position which Lord Canning was filling. He knew, as hardly any other man in the country knew, the difficulties and anxieties inseparable from the post; and he had bitterly resented his own treatment by the Government of the day.[2] Unwarned, however, by his own experience, and placing the most literal interpretation on Lord Canning's words, Lord Ellenborough proceeded to address to Lord Canning one of the severest lectures ever embodied in a public despatch to a distinguished functionary. It began by expressing the apprehension that this decree, threatening the disinherison of a people, would throw difficulties almost insurmountable in the way of the re-establishment of peace; it proceeded to condemn, in language as strong as it was unwise, the conduct of Lord Dalhousie in annexing Oudh, declaring that we cannot but in justice consider that those who resist our authority in Oudh are under very different circumstances from those who have acted against us in

Lord Ellenborough's despatch.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cl. p. 324.
[2] See *Sir Robert Peel*, by Parker, vol. iii. p. 15 *seq.*

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provinces which have been long under our government;[1] and that, consequently, the hostilities which have been carried on in Oudh bear rather the character of legitimate war than that of rebellion. After referring to the more merciful amnesties of other rulers, Lord Ellenborough proceeded: 'You have acted upon a different principle; you have reserved a few as deserving of special favour, and you have struck with what they will feel as the severest punishment the mass of the inhabitants of the country. We cannot but think that the precedents from which you have departed will appear to have been conceived in a spirit of wisdom superior to that which appears in the precedent you have made.'[2]

It is strange that any man in Lord Ellenborough's position should have brought himself to pen these phrases of rash indiscretion and studied insult. It is still more strange that any minister should have committed himself to such language without consulting the Cabinet to which he belonged.[3] Possibly he may have imagined that a secret despatch would not be made public, and that the reflections on Lord Dalhousie's policy, and the serious rebuke to Lord Canning himself, would be reserved for Lord Canning's own eyes. But even privacy could not have justified such expressions or such censure; and privacy, it might have been foreseen, was not possible. On the 6th of May the 'Times' published in its columns a copy of Lord Canning's proclamation. The proclama-

[1] The present writer will not be thought to be defending Lord Dalhousie's policy by anyone who will have the goodness to refer to his remarks on it in *Hist. of England*, vol. vi. p. 260 *seq.*; but he can find no excuse for a President of the Board of Control becoming the apologist of insurrection in a province which, rightly or wrongly, had been transferred to the Company's dominions.

[2] Lord Canning's proclamation (with the additional clause, to which reference is made in the succeeding paragraph of my text) will be found in the *Times* of the 6th, Lord Ellenborough's reply in the *Times* of the 8th, of May, 1858. Cf. *Hansard*, vol. cl. p. 599 *seq.*

[3] Lord Malmesbury distinctly states that neither the proclamation nor the despatch was laid before the Cabinet. *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 434.

tion thus published was not an exact copy of the draft which the Government had received. It contained an additional paragraph, which Lord Canning had been induced to add to it prior to its publication, but after he had despatched the original draft to his employers in London.[1] This additional paragraph promised large indulgences to all who 'shall promptly come forward and give to the Chief Commissioner their support in the restoration of peace and order.'

The proclamation, therefore, which was actually issued, was less sweeping than that which Lord Ellenborough had undertaken to criticise. On the day on which it appeared in the 'Times,' Mr. Bright asked the Secretary to the Board of Control whether the proclamation which had thus been published had been issued in accordance with instructions from this country; and, if not, whether the Government had since issued any direction in connection with it. The Secretary, Mr. H. Baillie, in accordance with instructions which he had personally received from Lord Ellenborough before going down to the House, replied that the Government had received from Lord Canning, some three weeks before, a draft proclamation which, with the exception of a single paragraph, appeared to be identical with that published in the 'Times;' that the proclamation had been considered by her Majesty's Government, and that a despatch had been addressed to Lord Canning expressing the views and opinions of the Government upon it. That despatch and the proclamation would be laid upon the table. Mr. Bright was not satisfied, however, with this answer, and expressed a hope that the Government would at once acquaint the House with the tenour of the despatch. Indiscretion is perhaps infectious.

Questions in Parliament.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cl. p. 754. This additional paragraph was inserted after Sir James Outram had drawn Lord Canning's attention to the effects of the proclamation. *Parl. Papers*, 1858, reprinted in *Times*, 22nd of May, 1858.

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At any rate, Mr. Disraeli at once rose and said that the Government had sent out a despatch disapproving Lord Canning's policy 'in every sense.'[1]

It is difficult to exaggerate the sensation created by this incident. It was at once seen that Mr. Disraeli's statement, that the Government had openly expressed its disapproval of Lord Canning's policy 'in every sense,' would make Lord Canning's position, difficult as it had hitherto been, impossible. And Lord Canning was not the only high officer whose position was becoming untenable. As soon as Lord Ellenborough had authorised Mr. Baillie to lay the papers before the House of Commons, the inconvenience, or rather inexpediency, of publishing the despatch occurred to the Prime Minister; and, at a conference between him, Mr. Disraeli, and Lord Ellenborough, it was decided, instead of publishing the whole despatch, to issue only extracts from it. How Lord Ellenborough could have acquiesced in this decision, it is difficult to imagine; for, by his instructions, Mr. Baillie had already laid the whole despatch on the table of the House of Commons, and copies of it had been privately sent to Lord Granville and Mr. Bright.[2] The decision, however, had the strange consequence that, while the despatch was laid *in extenso* on the table of the House of Commons, only extracts from it were laid on the table of the Lords. Prudence in one House, imprudence in the other; such was the strange development of a strange proceeding.

Lord Ellenborough resigns.

It was evident that the matter could not be left in this position. Lord Shaftesbury in one House, and Mr. Cardwell in the other, announced their intention of bringing forward motions expressing strong disapprobation of the premature publication by her Majesty's Ministers of the despatch. Confronted with these resolu-

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cl. pp. 180, 181. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 323.

tions, Lord Ellenborough decided to save his colleagues by sacrificing himself, and placed his resignation in the Queen's hands. It may be incidentally remarked that, as an ill-regulated consequence of an ill-regulated proceeding, he took the unusual course of writing to the Queen direct, instead of sending his resignation through the Prime Minister. No doubt, in doing so, he was within the letter of the Constitution, which in theory assumes all the servants of the Crown to be equal, and which is supposed to abhor the notion of a Prime Minister. But modern practice has so largely corrected the old doctrine, that it may be doubted whether any other minister in the nineteenth century ever acted; or whether any other minister will again act, in the manner in which Lord Ellenborough resigned.

On Lord Ellenborough's resignation, Lord Derby made a new attempt to secure Mr. Gladstone's services as a member of his Cabinet. His first efforts were made through one of his colleagues, who was on terms of intimacy with Mr. Gladstone, and on terms of still closer intimacy with Sir William Heathcote, Mr. Gladstone's colleague in the representation of his University. But Lord Derby's application was subsequently supported by Mr. Disraeli, in a letter, which nearly justifies his later statement—that he almost went on [his] knees to Mr. Gladstone.[1] It seems from this letter that Mr. Disraeli would have been prepared to resign the leadership of the House of Commons to Sir James Graham, if such an arrangement could have been made and would have facilitated Mr. Gladstone's return to the Conservative fold. But Sir James Graham in 1858 had no desire to return to official life, and decided on remaining in the comparative retirement of a private member

[1] The letter is in Mr. Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. i. p. 587. Mr. Disraeli's description of it is in the *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iii. p. 70.

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of the House of Commons, and Mr. Gladstone somewhat stiffly rejected the overture that was made to him.

1858. He is succeeded by Lord Stanley

Lord Derby thereupon decided on transferring to the place which Lord Ellenborough had vacated, his own son—Lord Stanley, who, on the formation of the Ministry, had been made Secretary of State for the Colonies. Young in years—for he was not thirty when he attained Cabinet rank—Lord Stanley had already obtained an unusual reputation. He possessed, indeed, none of those attractive qualities which had made his father the Rupert of debate. His somewhat slow and thick speech disqualified him for public oratory; but if his speeches bore no resemblance to his father's declamatory eloquence, or to the more brilliant and polished utterances which made Lord Ellenborough one of the first orators of the day, they were marked by a fullness of knowledge, an accuracy of thought, and a sobriety of judgment which few men have ever displayed. Though, too, his birth and education connected him with his father's party, his opinions were more liberal than those which usually emanated from the front Conservative bench. Men there were who doubted whether he would ultimately gravitate to the Liberal party, whose views on many subjects he obviously shared, or whether he was destined to reconstruct the Conservative party on a broader basis. The event did not wholly justify either of these anticipations. For many years after 1858, Lord Stanley continued to exercise a moderating and salutary influence on Conservative policy. He ultimately parted from his old friends on a quarrel in which history will probably consider that he was right; but his secession neither added to his reputation at the time nor to his influence afterwards. It became apparent that, if he was always prudent in counsel, he was sometimes timid in action; and that he was deficient in the qualities which occasionally make men of less judgment

safer because they are bolder pilots in extremity. Hence the world of politics, which at first, perhaps, appraised Lord Stanley beyond his worth, attached too little credit to him afterwards, and men came to regard the statesman with indifference whom a few years before they would have been proud to follow as their leader. In Lord Stanley's room Lord Derby selected, for the Colonial Office, Sir E. Lytton Bulwer, a man who had already risen to a high position in the literary world, and whose novels, and perhaps poetry, will be read when his political achievements have passed into oblivion. As a debater, Sir Edward had none of those qualities which make men powerful in the House of Commons. Deafness, indeed, disabled him from attempting reply. But on set occasions, when careful preparation had furnished him for debate, few men made more effective or telling speeches. His appointment added interest to a Ministry which already embraced one great literary man in the leader of the House of Commons; but it did not materially add to the strength of the Cabinet either in the council chamber or in the House.

The changes in the Cabinet naturally affected the whole situation. Lord Shaftesbury and Mr. Cardwell, indeed, both persevered in the motions which they had given notice that they would propose, and Lord Shaftesbury's motion, after a single night's debate, was defeated only by a narrow majority.[1] In the Commons the debate on Mr. Cardwell's motion seemed at first to presage the defeat of the Government. As the discussion proceeded, however, the result became more and more doubtful. Many members saw that there was something indecent in making a question affecting the highest interests of 150,000,000 people the mere battle-ground of party. The arrival of some further

The incident ends.

[1] 167 votes to 158. *Hansard*, vol. cl. p. 670.

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despatches from India, in which Lord Canning vindicated his own policy in a letter to Sir James Outram, made the motion still more inopportune.[1] At last, after a desultory conversation on the expediency of prolonging the debate, Lord Palmerston himself appealed to Mr. Cardwell to withdraw his resolution. Mr. Cardwell assented to Lord Palmerston's suggestion; and the House generally acquiesced in Mr. Bright's opinion, that, though the course thus taken would 'excite the amusement and perhaps the ridicule of the public,' it would commend itself to 'the solid judgment of the country.'[2]

The India Bill passed.

The decision had the effect of strengthening the position of the Government. It had escaped the consequences of a formidable attack, and it was tacitly acknowledged that its existence was assured for the remainder of the Session. It consequently became possible for it to press forward its chief legislative measure, and the second reading of the India Bill was carried without a division on the 24th of June.[3] Its clauses were rapidly considered in committee, and on the 8th of July the Bill was read a third time and passed.[4] During the next fortnight it passed through all its stages in the House of Lords, and on the 2nd of August the Queen in closing the Session was able to announce that she had given her willing assent to the Act for transferring to her direct authority the government of her Indian dominions.[5]

In the shape which the Bill ultimately assumed, it represented a compromise between the measure which had been introduced by Lord Palmerston at the commencement of the Session, and that which Lord Ellenborough had substituted for it. It was humorously

[1] These despatches will be found in the *Times* of the 22nd of May, 1858.
[2] *Hansard*, vol. cl. pp. 1040, 1042, 1055, 1056.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. cl. p. 37, cli. p. 371.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 1096.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 2370.

said of it at the time that if not a very good Bill, it had ceased to be a very good joke.[1] The Government of India was vested in a Secretary of State; the Secretary of State was to be assisted by a council of fifteen members, of whom eight were to be appointed by the Crown, and seven by the Court of Directors of the old Company. Subsequent vacancies on the council were to be filled up alternately by the Crown and by the elections of the council.[2] The members were to hold office during good behaviour.

The India Bill, which was thus carried, is a remarkable instance of the good sense of Parliament. It practically found a method for reconciling the conflicting views of Lord Palmerston and of his successors; and, if it decided on proceeding a little more cautiously than Lord Palmerston desired, it swept away the absurd devices for electing a council. Time, however, has done something to vindicate Lord Palmerston's opinion. The council, which the Conservative Government wished to consist of eighteen, and which the House of Commons fixed at fifteen, has since been reduced to twelve members; and expert opinion is in favour of a still further reduction of its numbers. Again, the power which was reserved to the council of filling alternate vacancies in its number has been abandoned; and the councillors themselves, instead of being chosen for life, have been appointed only for ten years, though the term has been occasionally extended to fifteen years. Thus experience has tended to confirm the views of Lord Palmerston, and to discredit the views which were expounded with so much ability by the old directors in the famous petition which Mr. John Stuart Mill had prepared. Judged by the result, the course which was suggested by the long administrative experience of

[1] *Times*, 22nd of June, 1858.
[2] See the Act 21 & 22 Vict., cap. 106, sects. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

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Lord Palmerston has proved far more practical than the alternative which the great philosopher propounded with so much force, and supported with so many cogent arguments. Thus the old adage received a new illustration, 'A pint of practice is worth a peck of theory.'

In the course of the debates on the India Bill, several questions of great importance were either directly raised or indirectly suggested. Mr. Bright, in the debate on the second reading, for example, expressed a strong opinion that the office of Governor-General should be abolished, and that India should be broken up into five presidencies, each communicating directly with the India Office at home.[1] Mr. Bright's prediction, that his proposal in the course of time would win support, has not been fulfilled. Experience has shown that there is a good deal more to be said for degrading the presidencies of Bombay and Madras to the rank of lieutenant-governorships than for carving two more presidencies out of Northern India. A question of more immediate importance was raised by Mr. Gladstone on report. He proposed that 'except for repelling actual invasion, or under other sudden and urgent necessity, her Majesty's forces in the East Indies shall not be employed in any military operation beyond the external frontier of her Majesty's Indian dominions without the consent of Parliament to the purposes thereof.'[2] Lord Stanley somewhat incautiously assented to a clause which he declared, however, 'had not much binding force, since a governor-general, under the influence of strong feelings in favour of war, might apply a very broad interpretation to the phrase "sudden and urgent necessity."' Lord Palmerston, on the contrary, vehemently denounced as unconstitutional a proposal which, at any rate, inconveniently reflected on his own policy

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cli. p. 343. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 1008.

towards Persia. The right of declaring war rested, so he argued, with the Crown, and to maintain that the previous assent of Parliament was necessary was to introduce a principle destructive of the British Constitution. The words moreover of the resolution would apparently prevent the Government from moving any part of the Queen's forces in India, for the purpose of carrying on military operations in any other part of the world, without the assent of Parliament.[1] This objection had so much force that, on the suggestion of the Solicitor-General, the clause was limited to the local Indian army, or, as the phraseology put it, to her Majesty's forces maintained out of the revenues of India.[2] And in this shape the clause reached the Lords. Every day's consideration, however, confirmed the impression that there was force in Lord Palmerston's contention; and ultimately Lord Derby introduced and carried a new clause forbidding the application of the Indian revenues to any military operations beyond the frontiers without the consent of Parliament, 'except for preventing or repelling actual invasion, or under other sudden and urgent necessity.'[3]

The question of the Jew.

The discussions on the India Bill occupied the greater portion of the Session of 1858. The advent, however, of a Conservative Government to power led to the solution of another problem, which had troubled Parliament for nearly thirty years. A new step in the direction of religious freedom was taken. A Conservative Government in office, unsupported by a majority of the Commons, found itself unable to maintain the principle which most of its leaders had advocated in opposition; and the Jew, for the first time, was admitted to the House of Commons.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cli. pp. 1011–1013.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1016.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 1696, and 21 & 22 Vict., cap. 106, sect. 55. The clause became of real importance when the Abyssinian War of 1867 was undertaken. Vide *infra*, ch. xi.

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Briefly stated, a member of Parliament in 1858 was required to take the oaths of allegiance, supremacy, and abjuration.[1] There was nothing in the words of the oath of allegiance to which a Jew could not subscribe; but it was taken on the Four Gospels—in a manner, therefore, repugnant to him. The oath of abjuration, however, an oath which had long lost its meaning,[2] contained the words, 'on the true faith of a Christian,' which had been expressly inserted in 1828 to exclude the Jew.[3] As early as 1830, an attempt was made to remove this disqualification; but the second reading of the Bill was rejected in an unreformed House of Commons by a considerable majority.[4] After the passing of the Reform Act, the same measure, introduced by the same member, met with more success in the Lower House of Parliament; but the relief, which was passed in the Commons both in 1833 and in 1834, was rejected by considerable majorities in the Lords,[5] and, 'as the determination of the Lords was clearly not to be shaken,'[6] the Commons forbore, for some years, to press a measure which, since no Jew had been

[1] This, of course, was not true of the Quakers and of the members of sects who objected to take any oath, and who had been allowed to substitute an affirmation for an oath. See *Hist. of England*, vol. iii. p. 359, note.

[2] Lord Campbell relates in his *Diary* that, in 1855, Mr. Justice Willes presented himself before him to take the oaths. 'When the judicial juror came to the oath of abjuration, he did not repeat the words after the officer, who with much emphasis was reading it. At last, the words being pronounced by which he ought to have abjured "the said James, and the descendants of the said James," I said, "Brother Willes, you should repeat these words after the officer of the court, that we may know that you abjure King James and his descendants." *Willes, J.*: "My Lord, I am abjuring them in my mind." *Chief Justice*: "That is not enough, Brother Willes. The statute requires the words to be spoken by you. Although there be no Pretender, and there have long ceased to be any descendants of the said James, you are bound with a loud voice to abjure them. I am sorry that the law should require such a farce; but, while the law exists, the farce must be played."' *Life of Lord Campbell*, vol. ii. p. 336.

[3] See *Hist. of England*, vol. ii. p. 380.

[4] *Hansard*, 2nd Series, vol. xxiv. p. 785; May, *Const. History of England*, vol. ii. p. 181.

[5] *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol. xx. p. 249, and vol. xxiv. p. 720.

[6] May's *Const. Hist.*, vol. iii. p. 181.

chosen to represent any constituency, had apparently only an academic importance.

1858. Baron Rothschild's election for the City of London.

In 1847 the question assumed a new shape. Baron Rothschild, popularly supposed to be the wealthiest man in England, was chosen to represent the great City of London. This choice altered the conditions of the problem. Without creating the acute difficulties which had arisen eighteen years before from Mr. O'Connell's election for Clare, it threw on Parliament the responsibility of deciding whether a man should be excluded from the position for which he had been selected by a powerful constituency because his religious views were based on the teachings of only the first half of the Bible. In 1848 Lord John Russell, who, it must be recollected, was also member for the City, made a fresh effort to remove the disabilities which excluded his own colleague from the House. Relief was again granted by the Commons, but again refused by the Lords. In 1850 Baron Rothschild, who had hitherto made no application to this effect, presented himself at the table of the House and asked to be sworn. It was decided after some discussion that a law which had been passed in 1839 for amending the law of evidence, and which enabled all persons to be sworn in the manner most binding to their conscience, was applicable to his case, and he was allowed accordingly to be sworn upon the Old Testament. He took the oaths of allegiance and supremacy in the accustomed forms, but he omitted from the oath of abjuration the words 'on the true faith of a Christian.' He was directed to withdraw; and the House, after some debate, decided that the words which he had omitted were part of the oath, and that he could not take his seat until he had been sworn in the exact words appointed by law.[1]

In 1851 another Jew, Mr. Alderman Salomons, was

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxiii. pp. 297, 769; May's *Const. Hist.*, vol. iii. p. 183.

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returned by another constituency. Like Baron Rothschild, he presented himself at the table and demanded to be sworn; and, like Baron Rothschild, he omitted the words, 'on the true faith of a Christian,' from the abjuration oath. He was ordered to withdraw; but, before the order was carried out, he actually spoke on the motion which preceded its adoption, and took part in one or two divisions. His conduct was purposely designed to enable the House to try in the law courts the question which had been discussed so long in the two Houses of Parliament; and the Court of Exchequer formally decided that the words, which no Jew could take, were part of the oath, and that no authority short of a statute was competent to dispense with them.[1]

During the next five years the subject continued in this unsettled position. A majority of the House of Commons supported, while a majority of the Lords refused, any modification of the oaths which would enable a Jew to sit in Parliament. The leader of the Conservative party, indeed, was, on this subject, less tolerant than his own supporters; and towards the close of the Session of 1857, to quote the language of the principal newspaper, 'went in at the Jews with all the dash of a prize fighter sure of the day. . . . There was an exuberance of bad logic, a recklessness of piety, and an insolence of personal allusion which seemed to imply that, on this occasion, he might say what he pleased.'[2] Other men, however, were already asking how long the action of the Lords was to overcome the settled resolution of the Commons. An Act of William IV. had empowered the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and all other bodies, corporate or incorporate, to make statutes authorising the substitution of a declaration for any oath or affirmation now required

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxviii. pp. 979, 1212; May's *Const. Hist.*, vol. iii. p. 184.

[2] See the *Times*, 11th of July, 1857.

to be taken or made.[1] Lord John Russell, on the suggestion of Sir Richard Bethell, who held the office of Attorney-General in Lord Palmerston's Administration, asked the House to appoint a committee to consider whether, under the terms of this Act, it could frame a declaration to take the place of the oath of abjuration. The subject was elaborately discussed by the large and exceptionally strong committee which was then appointed; but the committee ultimately decided, by a narrow majority,[2] that the Act could not bear the interpretation which the Attorney-General and Lord John Russell had endeavoured to put upon it. It thus became obvious that the Legislature, and the Legislature alone, could determine the question, and that the Commons were powerless to solve it without the co-operation of the Lords.

The Bill of 1858.

In these circumstances, Lord John again renewed the attempt to legislate which he had so often made. The opinion of the House of Commons on the subject was so clear, that the Bill which he introduced for the purpose passed its first and second readings without a division.[3] It reached the Lords early in April.[4] The form in which it was drawn enabled the strongest partisan of the Church to vote for its second reading; for the Bill, while amending the oath of abjuration, and consolidating it with the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, retained the words, 'upon the true faith of a Christian,' on which the whole controversy had turned, and only in a subsequent and separate clause directed the omission of the words when the oath was tendered to a Jew.[5] It was therefore possible to contend, as Lord St. Leonards did contend, that the Lords might

[1] 5 & 6 William IV., cap. 62; see especially sect. 8.

[2] *Parl. Papers*, Session 1857, vol. ix. p. 477.

[3] *Hansard*, vol. cxlviii. pp. 499, 1118.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. cxlix. p. 946.

[5] The Bill will be found in *Parl. Papers*, 1857–58, vol. iii. p. 629.

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pass the second reading of the Bill, and discuss the question of relieving the Jews when the particular clause dealing with that subject came before the committee. Lord Lyndhurst's suggestion was accepted by Lord Derby, and the Bill was read a second time.[1] This concession, however, only postponed the decision for a few days. When the Lords reached the clause relieving the Jews, they struck it out by a considerable majority. Perhaps the most remarkable sentence in the debate was that in which Lord Chelmsford, the new Lord Chancellor, closed his speech against the clause: 'My Lords, I trust that you will not fear still to pronounce that our "Lord is King, be the people never so impatient."' Lord Chelmsford apparently forgot that the writer whom he was quoting was a Jew, and that 'the Lord' to whom the quotation referred was the God of the Jews. It was perhaps more remarkable that three bishops, Villiers, Bishop of Carlisle, Hampden, Bishop of Hereford, and Thirlwall, Bishop of St. Davids, had the courage to support the clause.[2]

The question had now entered a new phase. As the Lords had passed the Bill, and merely struck out of it the clause which relieved the Jew, the Commons had the opportunity of considering the Lords' amendments. Lord John Russell naturally proposed that the Commons should disagree with the Lords and restore the clause; and the House, after accepting this motion, proceeded in accordance with its practice to appoint a committee 'to draw up reasons to be assigned to the Lords' for the disagreement. Mr. Duncombe, the member for Finsbury, at once proposed that Baron Rothschild should serve on the committee. He was

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. pp. 1477–86.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 1749–1794. The division was: contents 80, non-contents 119. The Lords might have repeated the joke which a similar majority had suggested to Lord Eldon and other Tories in 1821, and have spoken of the 39 who had saved the 39 Articles. Twiss, *Life of Eldon*, vol. ii. p. 416.

able to show that, early in the eighteenth century, Sir Joseph Jekyll had been appointed on a committee of secrecy before he had taken the oaths at the bar. There was, indeed, this difference between the case of Sir Joseph Jekyll and the case of Baron Rothschild. Sir Joseph had no objection to taking the oaths, and it was a mere accident that he had not taken them before he was selected to serve on the committee. The House, however, had formally decided, at that time, that 'it was not necessary for a member to be sworn at the bar before he could be appointed a member of a committee upstairs.' The precedent was so strong that the Government did not venture to resist it; and Mr. Duncombe's motion was carried.[1] The Commons, therefore, showed that, if the Lords had the power of excluding Baron Rothschild from sitting and voting in the House, they could not prevent him from serving on committees of the House.

Lord Lucan's compromise.

Reasons for disagreeing with the Lords were duly drawn up;[2] they were adopted by the Commons; they were delivered to the Lords at a conference;[3] and, on the last day of May, the Lords met to consider them. Immediately on their meeting, Lord Lucan—a Conservative peer, who is perhaps now chiefly recollected from the fact that he commanded the cavalry in the Crimean War, and, in that capacity, was partly responsible for the blunder of the Balaclava charge—rose to propose a compromise. He suggested that either House should be empowered by resolution to determine the form of oath to be administered, in that House, by persons professing the Jewish religion. Lord Derby did not venture wholly to resist a suggestion which came from one of his own supporters;[4] and it was ultimately decided that the

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cl. pp. 336, 440. The names of several members of the Cabinet will be found among both the ayes and the noes.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 529.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 859.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. cl. p. 1139 *seq.* Lord Derby himself, so I gather from a private letter from him in my possession, was more favourably disposed to this compromise than the terms

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Peers, while maintaining their own attitude on Lord John Russell's Bill, should pass a separate measure affording relief on the lines which Lord Lucan had advocated. This course, indeed, made the Lords look a little foolish. They were declaring as their reason for disagreeing from one Bill that 'the denial and rejection of that Saviour in whose name the Legislature daily offers up its collective prayers for the Divine blessing on its councils, constitutes a moral unfitness to take part in the legislation of a professedly Christian community;'[1] they were authorising by the other Bill either House of Parliament to admit the persons whom they had thus proclaimed morally unfit. But the compromise, however illogical, was felt to be acceptable. It afforded, at any rate for the time, a solution of the question which had troubled Parliament for a quarter of a century. It prepared the way moreover for a more rational arrangement. Two years later, the resolution which the House of Commons passed at the commencement of each Session was turned into a standing order;[2] and, in 1866, Parliament, taking a fresh step in advance, established a new oath, from which the words, 'on the true faith of a Christian,' were omitted. The door of the House of Lords was thus thrown open to the Jew;[3] and the same wealthy and respectable citizen, who in the fifties had succeeded in taking his seat in the House of Commons, was soon afterwards raised to the Lords.[4]

The compromise adopted.

of his speech might lead its readers to believe.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cli. p. 1376, and *Parl. Papers*, 1857–58, vol. iii. p. 635.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. clx. p. 1346.

[3] May's *Const. Hist.*, vol. iii. p. 187, note, and 29 & 30 Vict., c. 19.

[4] The Act of 1866 was the result of a measure proposed in 1865. In that year Mr. Monsell, a Roman Catholic, proposed to amend the oath imposed in 1829 on Roman Catholics by omitting from it the words which pledged them solemnly to abjure any intention of subverting the present Church Establishment as settled by law. *Hansard*, vol. clxxviii. p. 24. The Bill, after several warm debates, passed the Commons, but was rejected by the Lords. *Ibid.*, vol. clxxx. p. 821. Early, however, in 1866, Sir George Grey, as the mouthpiece of Lord Russell's Government, brought in a Bill, which had been announced in the Speech from the Throne, *ibid.*, vol. clxxxi. p. 25, substituting a short

The history of this long struggle affords a striking proof of the change of thought which had gradually taken place. The idea, which the nineteenth century had inherited from the eighteenth, that the full enjoyment of civil rights should be accorded only to those who professed the religion established by law, had disappeared with the repeal of the Test Acts in 1828, and the removal of the disabilities of the Roman Catholics in 1829. But the House of Commons before the Reform Act, and the House of Lords from 1833 to 1858, still refused to concede the full privileges of citizenship to all those who were outside the pale of Christianity. A Christian country should be governed, so it was thought, by a Christian Legislature, and no one who denied the truth of the Gospel story should have any share in framing its laws. If the Conservative party in 1858 had remained in opposition, or if, on acceding to power, it had enjoyed the support of the House of Commons, there can be no reasonable doubt that the Peers would have continued to maintain their attitude of resistance. But continued resistance became impossible when Lord Derby undertook to conduct the government of the country with only a minority of the House of Commons to sustain him. He could no longer venture to withstand the repeated decisions of the Lower Chamber. He was obliged to choose between the surrender of his principles and the abandonment of his position. Even if Lord Lucan had not suggested a possible expedient for the solution

oath applicable to Protestants and Roman Catholics alike, and indeed to all persons who did not object to be sworn, for the different oaths in force, *ibid.*, pp. 453, 456. This Bill was carried by a very large majority in the Commons (298 votes to 5), *ibid.*, p. 1730, and was ultimately passed by the Lords, *ibid.*, and cf. vol. clxxxii. pp. 1322, 2176. The controversy respecting oaths was thus settled, till it was revived some years afterwards in another shape by the refusal of an atheist to take the oath. It is remarkable that in the debates in 1865 and 1866 the controversy mainly turned on the Roman Catholic issue; and no one paid much attention to the fact that the measure of 1866, by a side wind, opened the door of the House of Lords to the Jew.

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of the problem, some means must have been devised for acceding to the wishes of the Commons. In opposition Lord Derby might have continued to resist their wishes. In office he was compelled to recognise that the views of the Peers must yield to the desires of the representatives of the people; for it is the House of Commons which makes and unmakes ministries; and it is the House of Commons which consequently determines the policy of Governments.

It resulted from this concession that the House of Commons obtained a new and unexpected proof of its influence. It suddenly discovered that its power might be increased by the presence in office of a Ministry which was opposed in opinion to the majority of its members; for it could force the Lords, while a Conservative Ministry was in office, to make a concession which it would not yield while a Liberal Government was in power. Hence it followed that, except on those greater questions on which the fate of parties is dependent, there was more chance of obtaining reform from the Conservatives than from the Liberals; and hence it followed, too, that the three Administrations of Lord Derby, throughout which he could not reckon on the support of a majority in the Lower House, were characterised by concessions which could not have been expected from the language which Lord Derby and his followers used in opposition.

The qualification of members of Parliament.

Another measure, passed in 1858, afforded one more proof of the inability of the Conservatives to resist in office reforms which they had resisted in opposition. From the reign of Anne to the reign of Victoria, an English member of Parliament had been required to possess the qualification of a certain amount of landed property.[1] The law, however, did not apply to Scottish members

[1] In the case of the county member 600*l.*, in the case of the borough member 300*l.*, a year in land, 9 Anne, c. 5.

and to the representatives of the universities, men who were probably considered too poor; or to the eldest sons of peers and of knights of the shire, men whose expectations were perhaps regarded as too great, to make it necessary or applicable. In 1838 the law had been so far altered that the qualification had been extended to personal as well as real property.[1] The existence of the qualification naturally limited the choice of the electors to comparatively rich men, or, in certain cases, to their eldest sons. It was, therefore, obnoxious to the large school of thinkers who demanded the abolition of all remaining privileges. Its repeal had been long demanded, and formed, in fact, one of the five points of the original Charter. Its association in that document with such dreaded requirements as manhood suffrage, equal electoral districts, and vote by ballot, perhaps increased the dislike of the Conservatives to yield upon it; for the Conservative party has always regarded the maintenance of untenable outworks as essential to the defence of their chief position. Yet even the Conservatives could not ignore the facts that the law, in some cases, had acted badly in the past, and that it was being frequently evaded in the present; for it was notorious that members who merely enjoyed an allowance from their fathers, and had no property of their own, had no scruples in making a declaration that they possessed the qualification which, in many cases, they certainly did not enjoy themselves.

The defence of a law which many men were denouncing as unjust, and which no man could honestly declare to be essential, became annually more difficult; and, so lately as 1857, Lord Palmerston had only resisted a motion for its repeal by urging that all questions connected with the representation of the people should be deferred till the Government had the opportunity of

[1] 1 & 2 Vict., c. 48.

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explaining their views on the whole subject of parliamentary reform in the ensuing Session.[1] There was every apparent reason why the Conservatives in 1858 should follow the course which had commended itself to Lord Palmerston in 1857; for, so far as parliamentary reform was concerned, the Conservative Government was in the precise position that the Liberal Administration had occupied the year before. But the Conservatives, with only a minority at their disposal, did not venture on the course which Lord Palmerston had taken with a majority at his back. Instead of demanding the postponement of the measure till they could deal with the whole subject of reform, they accepted it with alacrity. They even expressed their conviction that, 'in point of reason, in point of principle, and in point of expediency, it [was] desirable to get rid of this sham.'[2]

The Budget of 1858.

The influences which were thus inducing a Conservative Ministry, confronted by a Liberal majority, to abandon some of its old positions, and to reconsider some of its old opinions, had their effect on the financial arrangements of the year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in Lord Derby's Administration was the man who had led the attack on Sir Robert Peel's policy of free trade in corn, and who, in the succeeding Ministry, had endeavoured to conciliate the agriculturists by transferring one half the burden of local rates to the Consolidated Fund. He was the man who, more recently, had condemned the heavy expenditure for which

[1] *Ante*, p. 93.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. cl. p. 1435. It may be interesting to add that the Home Secretary, in accepting the Bill on behalf of the Government, reminded the House that Mr. Southey had been excluded from it by the existence of this qualification. As a matter of fact Mr. Southey was under a double disqualification. He not only wanted the necessary land, but he was also in receipt of a pension. Sir Robert Inglis asked him whether he would accept the seat if the qualification were presented to him; but he decided to decline it on other grounds. See Dowden's *Southey* in English Men of Letters Series, p. 176.

Sir G. C. Lewis had provided in the preceding year. Judged by the action which he had taken in the forties, Mr. Disraeli was bound to do something for the relief of the agriculturists. Judged by the language which he had used in 1857, he was equally bound to do something towards reducing expenditure. Mr. Disraeli, however, never allowed himself to be hampered by 'rusty phrases'[1] which he had coined in other times, and in 1858, instead of cursing the free-traders, he blessed them altogether.[2] Instead of proposing reduced estimates, he made himself responsible for estimates which exceeded those of his predecessor.

Assuming, as Mr. Disraeli assumed, that the income tax would automatically fall, in 1858–59, to 5*d.*, and assuming that the Exchequer bonds falling due within the year were duly paid, and the War Sinking Fund maintained, Mr. Disraeli considered that he could rely on a revenue of only 63,120,000*l.* to meet an expenditure of 67,110,000*l.*[3] Mr. Disraeli, in a situation which

[1] Mr. Disraeli applied this phrase to his old opinions in 1879. See *Selected Speeches*, vol. i. p. 338.

[2] Mr. Disraeli, at the commencement of his speech, contrasted the trade of the country in 1853—the year before the Crimean War—with that of 1857, and the figures showed an astounding prosperity. The exports had risen in the four years from 99,000,000*l.* to 122,000,000*l.*; the exports of textile goods from 52,000,000*l.* to 61,000,000*l.*; those of metals from 19,500,000*l.* to 26,000,000*l.*; the imports from 143,000,000*l.* to 187,000,000*l.*; the imports of raw cotton from 746,000,000 lbs. to 837,000,000 lbs. British shipping had grown from 9,000,000 to 11,600,000 tons, and foreign shipping from 6,000,000 to 7,400,000 tons. *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. p. 1269.

[3] The figures of the Budget were as follows:

Revenue.		Expenditure.	
Customs	£23,400,000	Debt	£28,400,000
Excise	18,100,000	Consol. Fund	1,900,000
Stamps	7,550,000	Army	11,750,000
Taxes	3,200,000	Navy	9,860,000
Income Tax	6,100,000	Miscellaneous	7,000,000
Post Office	3,200,000	Collection of Revenue	4,700,000
			63,610,000
Crown Lands	270,000	War Sinking Fund	1,500,000
Miscellaneous	1,300,000	Exchequer Bonds	2,000,000
	£63,120,000		£67,110,000

Hansard, vol. cxlix. pp. 1270–1276.

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would have taxed the capacity of a greater financier, decided to suspend the Sinking Fund, and to postpone the payment of the Exchequer bonds till 1860, when the termination of a long annuity would set free a large amount of revenue. By this easy, though not very heroic or consistent course, he reduced his deficit from about 4,000,000*l.* to about 500,000*l.* Something had still to be done to meet the remaining deficiency of half a million. Mr. Disraeli effected this by raising the duty on Irish spirits to a level with the duty on English spirits, and by imposing a stamp of one penny on bankers' cheques.[1] By these means he contrived to convert a deficit of about 4,000,000*l.* into a small surplus.

No serious objection was made to these proposals. It was recognised that a Minister in Mr. Disraeli's circumstances could not be expected to produce an heroic Budget: the free-traders rejoiced that there was nothing in Mr. Disraeli's plan which was opposed to their principles, and the payers of income tax had to content themselves with the relief which they received, and to look forward, with the best grace in their power, to the continuance of a burden which neither Mr. Gladstone's promises in 1853 nor Mr. Disraeli's criticism in 1857 had convinced them would cease in the near future.

Parliamentary reform.

In the meanwhile, Ministers were engaged in considering how they could best redeem the promise, which the Prime Minister had given, to deal with the question of parliamentary reform: that reform to which everyone was pledged, but which no one seemed to desire.[2] The Reform Bill of 1832 had had its origin in a committee of the Cabinet.[3] The Ministry of 1858 decided to follow the example of the Cabinet of 1830

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. pp. 1278–1291.

[2] *Times*, 20th of July, 1858.

[3] Lord John Russell and Lord Duncannon, who were not members of the Cabinet, had served on the committee. *Hist. of England*, vol. iii. p. 206.

by referring the question of reform to a committee.[1] This commitee had some material before it for its guidance; for Reform Bills had been introduced by Lord John Russell's Government in 1852, and by Lord Aberdeen's Government in 1854. Both these measures owed their origin to the same mind: both of them might be said to represent the mature conclusions of the veteran Whig statesman who had played so great a part in the preparation and conduct of the Reform Act of 1832.

The Reform Bill of 1852.

The Bill of 1852,[2] which had been introduced a few days only before the defeat of the Whig Ministry, and which naturally fell with the fall of its author, had proposed to confer the county franchise on the occupiers of houses valued at 20*l.* a year, and on the occupiers of tenements in boroughs valued at 5*l.* a year; and to introduce a new franchise—the first and faint forerunner of many fancy franchises—by conferring a vote on every person who paid 40*s.* a year in direct taxation. The Bill did not contemplate the disfranchisement of any constituency, but it created two new boroughs (Burnley and Birkenhead), and it enlarged the boundaries of sixty-six old boroughs by throwing into them adjacent towns and parishes.

The Bill of 1854.

The Bill of 1854 showed that Lord John Russell, in the interval, had adopted a bolder attitude. Influenced probably by Mr. Locke King's persistent advocacy, he proposed to extend the county franchise to resident occupiers rated at 10*l.* or upwards, and the borough

[1] The committee consisted of Lord Derby, Lord Stanley, Mr. Disraeli, Lord Salisbury, Sir E. Lytton, Sir J. Pakington, and Sir W. Jolliffe. I make this statement on the authority of a memorandum of my father, detailing the various committees to which the legislative programme of 1859 was referred in the autumn of 1855.

[2] The Bills of 1852, 1854, 1859, and 1860 were reprinted, in a very convenient form, as a Parliamentary Paper in 1866. See *Parl. Papers*, Session 1866, vol. lvii. p. 639. In preparing this account I have had the great advantage of access to a memorandum which Lord Thring has placed at my disposal, drawn up by him for the use of the Cabinet in 1866, comparing and explaining these four Bills.

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franchise to householders whose houses had an annual value of 6*l.* A new provision was introduced, that the occupier should have resided for two years, instead of for only one year, either within or in the near neighbourhood of the borough for which he claimed the vote.[1] But the Bill went much farther than this. It conferred a vote on every adult male who (*a*) had a salary or pension of 100*l.* a year, (*b*) derived an income of 10*l.* a year from the funds or some other kindred security, (*c*) paid 40*s.* a year in direct taxation, (*d*) was a graduate of any university, or (*e*) had 60*l.* in a savings bank. The Bill also contained a large measure of redistribution. It disfranchised twenty-nine boroughs; it partly disfranchised thirty-three other boroughs; and it conferred the seats which were thus set free on large counties and towns.[2] In doing so it adopted a new principle; for, in several instances, it conferred a third member on a large county and a large town, and it endeavoured to provide in such cases for the representation of minorities by declaring that, in these constituencies, no voter should be entitled to vote for more than two candidates.

The Bill of 1854 experienced no better fortune than the Bill of 1852. While the country was drifting into war, the Legislature was in no humour to consider a scheme of organic reform. But the Bill of 1854 at any rate had a large influence on the committee of the Cabinet of 1858, or on the Cabinet itself. The committee, or the Cabinet, boldly incorporated in the proposal which they made the fantastic franchise in-

[1] Technically the franchise was conferred on every person who on the last day of July in any year shall have occupied during that year and the whole of each of the two preceding years the premises in respect whereof he shall have been rated on a yearly value exceeding 6*l.* The provision, both as to residence and as to rating, is interesting because such residence and rating afterwards formed two of the famous 'securities' of the Act of 1867 which were abandoned by Mr. Disraeli while the Bill was passing through the House of Commons.

[2] It also enfranchised five new boroughs, and gave representatives to the Inns of Court and the London University.

tended to confer votes on holders of funds, depositors in savings banks, and graduates of universities; and conferred votes on all pensioners receiving a pension of 20*l.*, on ministers of all denominations, on all lawyers, on medical men, and on certificated schoolmasters. In these respects, then, the Bill of 1859 was a copy or an adaptation of the Bill of 1854.

Though, however, the Bill of 1859 closely followed its predecessor of 1854 in devising new and fantastic methods for the enfranchisement of particular sections of the people, in other respects it differed from what had hitherto been either passed or proposed. For the Bills of 1852 and 1854 had preserved the distinction, which the Act of 1832 had maintained, between the county and borough franchise; while the Bill of 1859 swept it away, extending, on one side, the 10*l.* occupation franchise to counties, and conferring, on the other side, a vote for the borough instead of for the county on the 40*s.* freeholder resident in a borough. Thus the Reform Bill of 1859 placed the county and borough voter on the same level of uninteresting uniformity. It confirmed, or rather emphasised, what Mr. Disraeli had himself called, 'the dreary monotony of the Settlement of 1832.'[1]

In arriving at, or accepting, this conclusion, the Cabinet was partly influenced by some remarkable inquiries which it had been confidentially making. It had authorised Lord Derby to obtain privately from some twenty great territorial magnates statements of the actual results which in different localities would follow the adoption of 30*l.*, 20*l.*, and 10*l.* respectively as the limit of the county occupation franchise both as to the numbers which would be brought in, and the effect upon

[1] Mr. Locke King's Bill, for extending the 10*l.* borough franchise to counties, had been read a second time in the summer of 1858 (*Hansard*, vol. cl. p. 1881, and Appendix), and Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli may have been to some extent influenced by the lessons of this division.

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the influence of property from the class of voters who would be put in.[1] It is obvious, therefore, that, in preparing a Reform Bill, the Government, instead of searching for a principle, sought for some expedient which would preserve the influence of the Conservative landowner.

One other franchise was, indeed, proposed at the same time. Lodgers, or, as Mr. Disraeli subsequently called them, persons who occupied only a portion of a house, were to be entrusted with a vote provided that they paid at least 8*s.* a week for their lodgings. But this franchise did not remedy the main defect of the measure, that it did nothing for the great class of toilers who, from their numbers and their importance, may be said, almost, to constitute the nation. The average working man, it was certain, did not pay 10*l.* a year for his house, or 8*s.* a week for his lodgings; and, in 1858, when the post office savings bank had not been invented, few working men had 60*l.* in a savings bank, and still fewer derived an income of 10*l.* a year from the funds.[2]

It was evident that the authors of the Bill of 1859, in their search for a franchise which would not interfere with the influence of property, had not discovered that remarkable product of later years, the Conservative working man. In order, however, to still further protect themselves against the possible intrusion of the working classes into the domain of politics, the committee, or the Cabinet, decided that the elector, if he chose, should be at liberty to record his vote by a voting paper. Whatever other consequences might ensue from this innovation, it was plain that it would be convenient to the wealthier men, who had votes in more than one constituency; and that it was calculated rather to

[1] I am using the exact words of an exalted member of the Cabinet, whose letter is in my possession.

[2] The Bill is printed *in extenso* in *Hansard*, vol. cliii., Appendix.

increase than to diminish the pressure which a landlord might exercise on his tenant, or an employer on his workman. The franchise clauses of the Bill, it ought to be added, were supplemented by a measure of redistribution. No borough, however small, was to be wholly disfranchised; but fifteen boroughs, returning two members, were each to lose a member. Eight of the members so set free were to be allotted to the three great counties, Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Middlesex, the remaining seven to seven unrepresented towns.

The proposal did not commend itself to the entire Cabinet. Even in 1859, people were not satisfied that 'fancy franchises,' based on no principle and fulfilling no want, could be safely accepted as an adequate solution of a difficult question; and, even in 1859, many Conservatives doubted whether the introduction of voting papers was either practicable or desirable. But the chief objections to the scheme were raised by the members of the Cabinet who held the offices of Secretary of State for the Home Department and President of the Board of Trade. Their views—for these men ultimately contributed to the fall of the Administration by retiring from the Cabinet—deserve some little notice.

The differences in the Cabinet.

These two members were confidentially communicating their doubts and hesitations to one another before the end of 1858. Indeed, the former of them sent the Prime Minister at the end of the year 'a new year's gift'[1] in the shape of an extended explanation of his views on parliamentary reform. Briefly stated, his objection to the scheme was that it was founded on no principle. There was nothing in the figure ten which, in his judgment, had any finality about it. It was a bad figure in the case of boroughs, but it was a worse figure in the case of counties; for, while the

[1] So Lord Derby described it.

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borough franchise had hitherto rested on the basis of citizenship, the county franchise had always rested on the basis of property. So far from assimilating the two franchises, it was highly desirable to keep them distinct; and he for his part thought that, if the occupation franchise in counties were reduced to 20*l.* houses, the point at which the house tax began, and the occupation franchise in boroughs to houses rated at 6*l.*, the point at which landlords ceased to be unable to compound for the tenants' rates, such a distinction would be maintained, and at the same time both franchises would be fixed on principles which would be clear to ordinary minds. In advocating this scheme the Home Secretary proposed the solution of the question to which many of his existing colleagues were to revert at a memorable crisis in the history of their party in 1867; and, though at that time the proposal, adopted after ten minutes' consideration, was abandoned in as many days, it is probable that it might have commanded a large measure of support in the spring of 1859.[1]

The other member of the Cabinet arrived at the same conclusion, but he reached it by different reasoning. He objected to the assimilation of the borough and county franchise. To use his own words: 'I hold that if you take a paint brush, and draw a line across the country, and say that all the people upon one side are to have the franchise, and all the people upon the other side are not to have it, as sure as the sun is in heaven you will have all the people upon the outside of the line, at some time or other, making a very ugly rush to break over it.'[2] Mr. Henley was no orator; but he had a capacity for coining phrases

[1] See Mr. Spencer Walpole's speech, *Hansard*, vol. clii. p. 1058. Mr. Walpole subsequently elaborated his views on reform in two articles in the *Quarterly Review* of October 1859 and January 1860.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. clii. p. 1065.

which struck the imagination, and imprinted themselves on the memory. The ugly rush, which he predicted in 1859, was long recollected both by his friends and by his opponents, and perhaps contributed to the defeat of the Ministry, from which he had retired, more even than the reasoning of the colleague who had left office with him.

The Bill introduced.

The second reading of the Bill, which was thus prepared and which was introduced by Mr. Disraeli on the 28th of February, was fixed for the 21st of March. On that evening Lord John Russell met the motion that the Bill be read a second time with an amendment condemning the change in the position of the 40*s.* freeholders, and declaring that no readjustment of the franchise would be satisfactory which did not provide for its extension in boroughs.[1] The debate on the amendment was protracted over seven nights, and, though much of it now affords only 'weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable' reading, some few of the speeches were distinguished by other qualities. Two members of the Government, Sir E. Lytton and Sir H. Cairns, surprised by the splendour of a prepared oration, and the reasoned rhetoric of a practised lawyer. Mr. Bright moved by his declamation on one side, Mr. Disraeli by his genius on the other; but, so far as history is concerned, more importance attached to other speeches, for the debate on the second reading of the Reform Bill of 1859 was the last great occasion on which Mr. Gladstone supported, both by his speech and his vote, the Conservative party.[2] In other quarters, too, coming events of 1866 cast only an imperfect and misleading shadow on the stage in 1859; for, while Mr. Horsman and Lord Elcho supported the

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cliii. pp. 389, 405.

[2] Mr. Gladstone voted with the Conservatives subsequently on the amendment to the Address, *vide infra*, p. 193, note, but on this occasion he did not speak.

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Government, Lord Grosvenor and Mr. Lowe recorded silent votes against them.

1859. Lord John Russell's amendment carried.

In a very full House, Lord John's amendment was carried by a substantial majority;[1] and the Ministry, meeting on the following day, decided that they had only to choose between the resignation of their offices and the dissolution of Parliament. They resolved on the latter course; and accordingly on the 19th of April Parliament was prorogued by the Queen, her Majesty announcing her intention 'forthwith to dissolve the present Parliament, with a view to enable her people to express, in the mode prescribed by the Constitution, their opinion upon the state of public affairs.'[2] The issue on which her Majesty required the opinion of the public was obviously a much larger one than the Reform Bill of the Conservative Government, or the amendment of Lord John Russell. As, indeed, the Queen herself went on to say, the appeal had become necessary in consequence of the difficulties of conducting public business in the House of Commons, which had practically declared its want of confidence in two Administrations in little more than twelve months. The true issue in 1859 was that which ought to have determined every election in the country since the Reform Act, the issue whether the people of this country desired that its business should be conducted by Whig or Tory, Liberal or Conservative, by the party of progress or the party of retrogression.

Parliament is dissolved.

The issue, in 1859, was indeed partially obscured by the events which were taking place on the continent of Europe; for, at the time at which the earlier elections were held, French troops were being hurried across the Alps, and Napoleon was preparing to place himself at their head in Northern Italy. The cause and consequences of the Franco-Austrian War of 1859 will be

[1] 330 votes to 291. *Hansard*, vol. cliii. p. 1257.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1898.

related in another chapter. Here it is sufficient to remark that, while the upper classes were suspected of a leaning towards Austria, the lower classes were animated by a passionate desire for Italian independence; and the friends of Italy undoubtedly thought that the cause of peace and the cause of freedom would be safer in the hands of the Liberal leaders than in those of Lord Derby and Lord Malmesbury. In one sense their opinion was unjust. Few Ministers have laboured harder to preserve peace than Lord Malmesbury worked in the spring of 1859. In another sense it was true. The future of Italy owed as much to the election of 1859 as to the battle of Solferino; for it replaced Lord Malmesbury, a Minister in favour of peace and Austria, with Lord John Russell, a Minister in favour of peace and Italy.

Thus, though the Conservatives gained some scattered successes at the polls,[1] the verdict of the nation as a whole was given against them; and when the new Parliament assembled, the Liberal party was encouraged to meet the Address with a direct vote of want of confidence. They entrusted the motion to a young man, Lord Hartington, who at that time was better known in society than in politics, and who, as the heir to a great title and a great estate, and the representative of a great historic name, seemed likely to attract supporters. Lord Hartington's amendment to the Address was carried, in a full House,[2] by a small

[1] It was computed that the new Parliament comprised 353 Liberals and 302 Conservatives. The net Conservative gain at the polls was placed at 24 seats. *Times*, 21st of May, 1859.

[2] 323 votes to 310. *Hansard*, vol. cliv. p. 417. Lord Malmesbury thought that the Ministry would not have been defeated if Mr. Disraeli had previously laid the Italian Blue Book on the table of the House of Commons. See *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 491. Mr. Gladstone, it is worth adding, voted with the Government, but he did not speak in the debate. The division in a House, including the Speaker and the tellers, of 638 members, was the largest that had ever taken place in the House of Commons.

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Lord Derby resigns.

majority, and Lord Derby at once placed his resignation in the Queen's hands.

Thus ended Lord Derby's second attempt to govern the country with only a minority of the House of Commons supporting him. It would have been hopeless from the beginning if the dissensions of the Liberal party had not weakened the Opposition. The cause of these dissensions had not been completely removed at the time of the division on Lord Hartington's motion: Lord Palmerston had not forgotten his dismissal in 1851; Lord John Russell had not forgiven his treatment in 1855. The Liberal party, in 1859, moreover showed no signs of cohesion. On the extreme left stood the Radical wing, strong in their faith, strong in the eloquence of their leader, but bitterly opposed to Lord Palmerston's policy. On the extreme right stood the remnant of Sir Robert Peel's friends, still vibrating between old traditions and new tendencies. Before, indeed, the Liberal leaders had drawn up the amendment by which Lord Derby's Government had been overthrown, some sort of agreement had been patched up at a great meeting of their party, at which Lord Palmerston and Lord John had given their friends the most distinct assurances of their willingness to co-operate.[1] The two men, in fact, had determined to ask the Queen to play the part of Paris, and to award the apple of preference to the candidate of her own choice.[2] Her Majesty, however,

[1] The language is that of the *Times*, 7th of June, 1859, evidently inspired by some one who was present.

[2] The arrangement had been concluded at a great meeting in Willis's Rooms. 'In the days of our youth,' said Mr. Disraeli, 'Willis's Rooms were managed by patronesses. The distinguished assemblies that met within those walls were controlled by a due admixture of dowagers and youthful beauties—young reputations and worn celebrities—and it was the object of all social ambition to enter there. Now Willis's Rooms are under the direction of patrons, and there are two of those patrons below the gangway. They are the noble Lord the member for the City of London [Lord J. Russell], and the right hon. gentleman the member for North Wiltshire [Mr. S. Herbert].' *Hansard*, vol. cliv. p. 143. The

not unnaturally shrank from the task of deciding between two statesmen each of whom had filled with distinction the first place in her counsels; and determined to evade the difficulty by entrusting a friend of both of them with the task of forming a Government. The statesman on whom her choice fell, Lord Granville, had all the qualifications which tact and temper, manners and moderation, can bestow; but he lacked both the force and the authority which were required for success. Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, indeed, both gratified him by professing that they were ready to take office under him; but, while Lord Palmerston expressed his readiness to help Lord Granville without coupling his assistance with any condition, Lord John only expressed an equal readiness to assist provided that he was entrusted with the lead of the House of Commons. Writers of authority and repute have in consequence thrown on Lord John the responsibility of Lord Granville's failure; yet it is certain that he had only expressed what Lord Palmerston had assumed.[1] In any case it is doubtful whether Lord Granville could have succeeded in his task. Tact and temper, manners and moderation, are admirable qualifications for the chairmanship of many difficult undertakings; but sterner and perhaps rougher stuff is wanted for the first position in a Cabinet.[2]

The Queen sends for Lord Granville

Lord Granville's inability to form a Government compelled the Queen to do what she had hitherto shrunk from doing, and choose between the two claimants.

Lord Palmerston Prime Minister.

dowager and the youthful beauty! The young reputation and the worn celebrity! How carefully Mr. Disraeli prepared his telling epigrams!

[1] *Life of Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 453; cf. *Life of Lord J. Russell*, vol. ii. pp. 315–318.

[2] Lord Granville, somewhat injudiciously, repeated what passed between the Queen and himself, to several of his personal friends, one of whom communicated it to the *Times*, which published a full report of it on the 13th of June. See the *Times* of that date, and Lord Granville's explanation in *Hansard*, vol. cliv. p. 426. The Queen was naturally annoyed at the publication of her conversation, and said to Lord Clarendon, 'Whom am I to trust? These are my very words.' *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 257.

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Her choice fell on Lord Palmerston, to whom the opinion of the public was steadily inclining. Lord Palmerston, with admirable tact, at once sent a note to Lord John to acquaint him with the fact, and to ask him what office he would like to take; and Lord John stipulated that he should be made Foreign Minister. Perhaps neither man foresaw the full consequences of this choice. In a larger sense it is not perhaps too much to say that Italy owes to it her unity. In a smaller sense the unity of Lord Palmerston's Cabinet was equally assured; for, during the next six years, Lord John's whole time was absorbed in questions on which Lord Palmerston and he were agreed; and he had no leisure to press the subjects on which the Prime Minister and he still differed.[1]

The accession of Lord John Russell removed the main difficulty in the formation of the new Government. When he and Lord Palmerston were agreed, the rest of the task was comparatively easy. It was, however, the natural desire of both statesmen to combine in the new Cabinet the representatives of all shades of Liberal principles—to secure the adhesion of the extreme men on the left wing, and of the Peelites on the right wing. With the first of these objects in view, Lord Palmerston reserved the Presidency of the Board of Trade for Mr. Cobden, who had been paying a visit in the United States, and who did not reach England on his return till the 29th of June. Mr. Cobden, however, thought it inconsistent with his declared opinions to accept office under Lord Palmerston;[2] and the Presidency of

[1] At the first meeting of the Cabinet of 1859, Lord John took his seat at the farther end of the table, and Lord Palmerston, observing it, called out to him, 'Johnnie, you will find that place very cold, you had better come up here.' Lord John was thus established in close proximity to Lord Palmerston; and as far as I have been able to discover, after a pretty full examination of the correspondence of the two men, no trace of the old differences ever reappeared.

[2] Morley's *Cobden*, vol. ii. pp. 226–236.

the Board of Trade was ultimately conferred on Mr. Milner Gibson. With the second object Lord Palmerston offered Mr. Gladstone the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, and Mr. Gladstone accepted that office. His friends, Mr. Sidney Herbert and Mr. Cardwell, at the same time became Secretary of State for War and Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Mr. Gladstone accepts the Chancellorship of the Exchequer.

Of all the appointments to the new Government, that of Mr. Gladstone excited most interest at the time and proved of most importance afterwards. Mr. Gladstone had never been a follower of Lord Palmerston.[1] He had left his first Administration almost immediately after its formation; he had spoken and voted against the Prime Minister in 1857 and in 1858; he had sat on the Conservative benches; he had been offered high office by Lord Derby; he had accepted an important mission from Lord Derby's Government; he had spoken and voted in favour of the Reform Bill of 1859, and he had voted against Lord Hartington's motion. He was, moreover, still a member of the Carlton Club, the chosen home of Conservatism; in which, however, a little later it was declared that you might find every type of politician except the original article. His junction with Lord Palmerston was unquestionably regarded by his old friends as an act of treachery, and it was decided to oppose his re-election for the University, of which nothing could prevent his being the most brilliant representative. The scheme failed; for Lord Chandos, the heir to the Dukedom of Buckingham, who was persuaded to stand against the new Minister, was defeated by a large majority. But the election had its results. Those, indeed, who have followed Mr. Gladstone's career most closely will perhaps conclude that it

[1] Mr. Gladstone said to the Bishop of Oxford in 1857 (13th of October), 'I have never ceased to rejoice that I am not in office with Palmerston, when I have seen the tricks, the shufflings, the frauds he daily has recourse to.' *Life of Bishop Wilberforce*, vol. ii. p. 349.

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was the action of the Conservative party, rather than the arguments of Liberal statesmen, which made him gradually move farther and farther from the associations in which his youth had been passed, for he clung to the links which still bound him to the traditions in which he had been reared, and he was carried by the rising tide of progress into the Liberal camp, because these links were severed by his old friends.

The time of the Session had practically been occupied with the debates which had led to the change of Ministry. The end of June arrived before Lord Palmerston was enabled to take his seat as Prime Minister. Supply had still to be voted; the Budget had still to be brought forward; it was plain that the little time which was still before Parliament would have to be devoted to business of this character, and that legislation on any important subject must be postponed till another year. Lord Palmerston's vague assurance that he was in favour of neutrality abroad, and that he would prepare and produce a Reform Bill in another Session, was accepted as satisfactory because it was obvious that it was the utmost which he could be expected to undertake.[1]

The Budget of 1859.

Nearly three weeks after Lord Palmerston's preliminary explanation, Mr. Gladstone, on the 18th of July, was enabled to introduce the Budget of 1859. More than six years had passed since he had made the great financial statement which had placed him, at one bound, on a level, as a financier, with Sir Robert Peel, as an orator, with Mr. Pitt. In the interval, the Exchequer had been filled by a financier who was no orator, and an orator who had no knowledge of finance; and curiosity was naturally aroused by the circumstance that the financial condition of the country was again to

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cliv. p. 478.

be expounded by a consummate speaker and a great fiscal authority. Yet the Budget of 1859 was, from its very nature, provisional. Mr. Gladstone, in proposing it, merely prepared the way for the future. It was a preface to the Budget of 1860.

Mr. Gladstone, at the outset, was in a position to draw a favourable picture of the situation. The revenue of 1858–59 had proved much more productive than Mr. Disraeli had anticipated, and, though the expenditure had concurrently increased, the surplus was considerably greater than had been foreseen. So far, therefore, as the year which had closed was concerned, the results were, in every way, satisfactory.[1] Finance ministers, however, are naturally more anxious about the future than the past; and the fact that 1858–59 had provided a comparatively satisfactory surplus did not diminish Mr. Gladstone's difficulty in dealing with the fiscal arrangements for 1859–60. For war had again made an impression on finance. The struggle between France and Austria had imposed its charges on the British taxpayer, and the army and navy estimates, which, in the happy days before the Crimean War, had averaged only 15,000,000*l.* or 16,000,000*l.* annually, and which, even in 1857–58, had not reached 22,000,000*l.*, were now placed at more than 26,000,000*l.* Inflated in this way, the expenditure of the year was estimated at no less than 69,207,000*l.*, a sum which, at that time, had never been approached in a period when Britain was at peace with every continental power.

To meet this large sum, Mr. Gladstone had an income of only 64,340,000*l.*; he had, in other words, to

[1] Mr. Disraeli had expected 63,920,000*l.*, and the revenue had amounted to 65,477,284*l.* The expenditure, which Mr. Disraeli had placed at 63,610,000*l.*, reached—including some 390,000*l.* for the war in China, and some 390,000*l.* a remanet of the cost of the Russian War—64,663,882*l.*

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provide for an estimated deficiency of nearly 5,000,000*l.*;[1] and he had to make this large demand on the bounty of the taxpayers on the eve of the very year which he had himself held out to them as the time at which the income tax might be finally remitted. The stern logic of facts, indeed, over which he had little or no control, justified, to some extent, the failure of his prediction, for, as Mr. Gladstone himself was at pains to point out, if the expenditure had not grown, the increase of the revenue would have provided Parliament with the means for carrying out the pledge of 1853. But while, in the interval, the revenue had grown by rather more than 5,000,000*l.*, the expenditure had increased by more than 13,000,000*l.*, and that, said Mr. Gladstone, 'is a very simple, transparent, and conclusive explanation of the difficulties with regard to parting with the income tax.'[2]

So far, then, from being in a position to afford relief to the payer of direct taxation, Mr. Gladstone found it necessary to provide for the greater part of his deficit by a fresh appeal to him. The income tax was raised from 5*d.* to 9*d.*, and the additional 4*d.* was collected in one payment on the income of half a year. This proposal supplied him with 4,340,000*l.*[3] He obtained

[1] The Budget figures were as follows:

Revenue.		Expenditure.	
Customs	£23,850,000	Debt	£28,600,000
Excise	18,530,000	Consol. Fund	1,960,000
Land and Taxes	3,200,000	Army	13,300,000
Stamp	8,100,000	Navy	12,782,000
Income Tax at 5*d.*	5,600,000	Civil Service	7,825,000
Post Office	3,250,000	Revenue Depts.	4,740,000
Crown Lands	280,000		
Miscel. Receipts	1,530,000		
	£64,340,000		£69,207,000

Hansard, vol. cliv. pp. 1390–1393. By an obvious misprint *Hansard* places the cost of the Revenue Departments at 474,000*l.* instead of at 4,740,000*l.*

[2] *Hansard*, vol. cliv. p. 1404.

[3] The proposal applied to incomes exceeding 150*l.* a year. Incomes below that amount were to pay an additional 1½*d.* *Ibid.*, pp. 1407, 1408; cf. as to the proposal itself, *Mr. Gladstone, a Study*, by Sydney Buxton, p. 28.

another 780,000*l.* by reducing, by about six weeks, the time for which credit was allowed to the maltsters for payment of malt duty. By these two operations he converted a large deficit into a small surplus.

The Budget naturally excited some criticism, but it encountered little serious opposition. Most public men were convinced that the increased expenditure which the Government was incurring was necessitated by the war on the Continent. Few public men could doubt that, if the expenditure were necessary, an increase of the income tax was the most convenient method of providing for it. At the end of July, indeed, when a large portion of the financial year is already past, few other expedients are available for consideration. For even if the House had been disposed to adopt what Mr. Gladstone called the 'odious' alternative of laying 3*d.* or 4*d.* or 5*d.* on each pound of tea, or an additional 3*s.*, 4*s.*, or 5*s.* on each hundredweight of sugar, it would not obtain twelve months' duty. 'Three and a half months are irrevocably gone and counted with the past. One and a half months more have already been forestalled by payments in anticipation.' And thus 'the divining faculty of an intelligent audience' could only bring them to the conclusion at which Mr. Gladstone had already arrived, that to the income tax Parliament must turn to make good the greater portion of the deficit for which its policy was responsible.

The Reform Bill of 1860.

The Budget really concluded the only important work which the Legislature discharged in the short Session of the new Parliament in 1859. House and Cabinet, relieved from their labours, were free to speculate on the future. In that future one question, though it interested hardly any one, dominated politics. The party which had introduced a Reform Bill in 1852 and in 1854, which had promised a Reform Bill in 1858, and which had finally resisted the Bill of 1859 on the ground

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that it did not go far enough, could hardly refuse to deal with the matter in 1860. There was a general impression, indeed, even among the opponents to reform, that it would be a good thing if Lord Palmerston could introduce some mild measure which would make the minimum of change, but, at the same time, take away all excuse for further agitation. Mr. Bright was almost alone in advocating a bolder course; and, though Mr. Bright attracted by his eloquence, he made no progress in the new crusade which he was conducting. Even Mr. Cobden threw a little cold water on his friend's zeal;[1] while, with cold-blooded cynicism, the 'Times' declared that the columns which it was devoting to Mr. Bright's meetings seemed 'space thrown away. They attract no attention; no one seems to read them; they form no topic of conversation; they bring us no correspondence; they are never praised or blamed, enforced or denounced.'[2] Even so ardent a reformer as Lord Brougham declared that the question of parliamentary reform was asleep if not dead.[3] Two months later, when the Ministry had actually introduced a Reform Bill, the Prince Consort declared that 'it scarcely excites as much interest as a Turnpike Trust Bill.'[4] Perhaps it is on this principle that Lord Palmerston's private secretary, in writing the life of his chief, has not thought it necessary to make even a passing allusion to the Reform Bill of 1860.

The Bill of 1860, which had been prepared by a Cabinet committee,[5] was introduced by Lord John Russell on the 1st of March. There is a story that Lord John selected the day because on the same day twenty-nine years before he had introduced the great measure of

[1] See Morley's *Cobden*, vol. ii. pp. 346–349.

[2] *Times*, 9th of January, 1860.

[3] *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 43.

[4] Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. v. p. 51. Oddly enough, Lord Derby used the same expression afterwards in the House of Lords. *Hansard*, vol. clvii. p. 1956.

[5] *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 276.

1832.[1] If there is any foundation for the legend, Lord John must himself have been struck with the altered conditions in which he spoke in 1860 from those in which he had risen in 1831. As a member said in the course of the debate on its introduction, 'There was a pretty "kick-up"' in 1831, and 'there will be no such kick-up in favour of the present Bill, I'm sure.' Yet the Bill was simple and intelligible. It extended the county franchise—it could not do less after the Bill of 1859—to houses rated at 10*l.* a year; it extended the borough franchise—it could not do less after the amendment by which the Bill of 1859 had been defeated—to houses rented at 6*l.* a year. It deprived twenty-five small boroughs of one member each, and it allotted fifteen new members to the larger counties, five to four unrepresented towns; four to some large boroughs; and one to the University of London. It was computed by its authors that it would add some 200,000 electors to the borough constituencies,[2] and it was afterwards stated that it would increase the entire electorate only by 300,000 or 350,000 persons.[3]

The Bill withdrawn.

The fate of the Bill was singular. It may almost be said to have died of a slow decline. 'After lingering on for several weeks with unprecedented tardiness and delay, and a languid uninteresting discussion—debate it cannot be called—the second reading of the Reform Bill [was], at last, passed without opposition' in the beginning of May.[4] But this effort almost exhausted the energy of an indifferent House under an indifferent leader. Though the Government made a feeble attempt to go into committee on the Bill, everyone knew that the end was visibly approaching. No one, or hardly any one, was anxious for the Bill in the House: no one, or hardly any one, wanted it out of doors. Even Lord

[1] *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 294.
[2] *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 2056.
[3] *Life of Bright*, vol. ii. p. 53.
[4] *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 306.

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John Russell was compelled to admit that it was better to withdraw the Bill than drag an imperfect measure through a reluctant Parliament and enforce it on an unwilling country.[1] He had already applied to the working classes, in his speech on the second reading of the Bill, the lines in the 'Twa Dogs' of Burns:

> But, how it comes, I never ken'd yet,
> They're maistly wonderfu' contented.[2]

On the 12th of June the Bill was accordingly withdrawn. The leader of the Opposition pronounced the course prudent and not undignified. Mr. Bright acquiesced in it as inevitable.[3]

There are few things more singular in recent history than this episode. That reform, which had been promised by successive Cabinets, should have perished amid universal apathy, is a singular commentary on the perspicacity of the statesmen who pledged themselves to it, and on the consistency of the people who demanded it. Whether the people, enjoying a fair measure of prosperity, were no longer anxious for change, or whether, occupied with other matters, they had no leisure to concentrate their thoughts on parliamentary reform, it is certain that they made no sign in 1860; and that, while their breath might have raised a blast which would have carried the ship of Reform into harbour, they suffered it to lie, a waterlogged vessel, on a sleeping

[1] Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. v. p. 57.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. clviii. p. 200.

[3] For the introduction of the Reform Bill, *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 2050; for its withdrawal, *ibid.*, vol. clix. p. 270. The Bill itself is printed in the Appendix to vol. clvii. The second reading was carried after six nights' debate without a division, *ibid.*, vol. clviii. p. 652. But the House was so indifferent that an attempt was made on the last night of the debate to count it out, *ibid.*, p. 598, and a member of influence declared that not ten members out of 100 had any inclination for the Bill, and that forty out of every fifty looked upon it with disapprobation and alarm, *ibid.*, p. 574. A motion was made later to postpone the Bill till after the census of 1861, and a further motion for adjournment was only defeated by 269 votes to 248, *ibid.*, vol. clix. p. 139. A week later the Bill was withdrawn.

ocean, till, abandoned by its pilot, it sank beneath the waves of oblivion. Their temper was admirably reflected by the veteran statesman who stood at the head of affairs. He had seen the introduction of the measure with regret, he watched its withdrawal with satisfaction. For his time, at any rate, it was certain that the political atmosphere would not be disturbed by any loud clamour for reform. The deluge might come at last, but it would not come in the days of his own Administration.

CHAPTER IV.

THE UNION OF ITALY.

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1859.

Orsini's attempt on Napoleon's life.

ORSINI'S attempt on the French Emperor's life produced much more than an explosion in the streets of Paris and the fall of Lord Palmerston's Ministry in London. Its almost immediate consequence was the Franco-Austrian War and the freedom of Italy; its later result, the Franco-German War of 1870, and the fall of the Second Empire.[1] The bombs, which missed their mark at the time, produced consequences more far-reaching than those which the assassin had contemplated. They created a kingdom; they destroyed an empire; they made changes, apparently lasting changes, on the map of Europe.

The consolidation of Italy—the conversion of a geographical expression into a concrete fact—might indeed have occurred if Orsini had never conceived his horrible design. The causes which affect history are usually more remote than the immediate events which precipitate catastrophes. And, just as the First Napoleon, in all probability, would have been ultimately overthrown if the Duke of Wellington had been forced to retreat from Waterloo, so Italy, probably, would have achieved her independence without the

[1] 'C'est en Italie que s'est décidé le sort du Second Empire.' De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. ii. p. 251. It is remarkable that the Queen, writing in 1858, predicted this very thing. 'I think yet that . . . France will not be so eager to attempt what I firmly believe would end in the Emperor's downfall.' Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 375.

help of Orsini. But, just as Waterloo was the decisive event which terminated the first French Empire, so Orsini's bombs were the cause which precipitated the Franco-Austrian War and the independence of Italy.

Italy after 1848.

To the superficial observer, the cause of Italy seemed almost hopeless after 1848. Marshal Radetzky's strategy had proved superior to Charles Albert's tactics, and the strength of the Austrian armies to the spirit of the Piedmontese. The little kingdom, which had dared to confront a great empire, was reduced to extremity; and no one foresaw that the cause which had been hopelessly defeated would gloriously triumph; that Novara would be reversed at Magenta and Solferino.

Great nations, said Mr. Disraeli, are those which produce great men; and Piedmont, in the hours which succeeded her defeat, was saved by the greatness of her sons. In her new King and in her new Minister she found men. The one, when the decisive moment arrived, met a great crisis like a hero; the other, in the long hours of preparation and the shorter hours of trial, proved himself the greatest statesman of his age.

The rise of Count Cavour.

Count Cavour, a younger son of the Marquis de Cavour, was born in 1810. He was therefore five years older than Prince Bismarck, the only other statesman of the nineteenth century whose achievements can be compared with his own; and two years younger than the Emperor, who became the chief instrument of his policy. He began life with few advantages; his education was defective;[1] a short military career was abruptly terminated; and from 1831 to 1846 he passed the life of a country gentleman, introducing new im-

[1] He used to pretend that he knew neither Greek nor Latin, and he declared that it was easier to create an Italy than to write a sonnet. Mazade, *La Vie de Cavour*, p. 13.

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provements into agriculture, and conducting the affairs of an estate with the vigour with which he afterwards directed the policy of a nation.[1] But agriculture alone was insufficient for his energy. In 1847, in alliance with other Italians destined to achieve greatness, he founded the Risorgimento; in 1848 he entered the Piedmontese Parliament as member for Turin; in 1850 he joined the D'Azeglio Cabinet as Minister of Commerce; and in 1852 he became Prime Minister.[2]

From the day, on which he first addressed himself to politics, to the day of his premature death, Count Cavour's one aim was the liberation and union of Italy. To that end his whole policy was directed; to accomplish it, he was prepared to sacrifice not merely his life, but his country. In this respect he affords a remarkable contrast to the great German statesman, whose career, in other ways, so closely resembles his own. Prince Bismarck, it has been well said, was 'plus Prusse qu'Allemand;'[3] Count Cavour has been equally well described as 'plus Italien que Piémontois.'

His policy during the Crimean War.

The difficulties of the Crimean War furnished Count Cavour with his first opportunity. Piedmont had no ground of quarrel with Russia, yet her Minister made her the ally of the Western powers for the sake of obtaining for her a status in Europe. He even refused a subsidy for the Piedmontese contingent; if Piedmont were to join the alliance, she must join it on equal terms with her allies.[4] He reaped the fruits of his policy

[1] It was at this time that he said, 'Je ne sais pas faire les choses à demi. Une fois lancé dans les affaires, je m'y suis donné tout entier.' Mazade, *La Vie de Cavour*, p. 15.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 30, 38, 50, 57, 75. The reader who wishes a shorter account of Cavour than can be found in the standard biographies, may safely turn to Countess Cesaresco's excellent monograph in the Foreign Statesmen Series.

[3] Von Sybel's *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iv. p. 470, and M. Rothan in *Revue des deux Mondes*, 1st of February, 1899 p. 533. In mentioning M. Rothan I trust that I may be permitted to record my sense of the loss which modern history has sustained through his death.

[4] Mazade, *La Vie de Cavour*, p. 111 Count d'Usedom described the alliance as a pistol-shot in the ears o

when Napoleon, in December 1855, put the question to him, 'Que peut-on faire pour l'Italie?', when the great powers, who had taken part in the war, refused to listen to the protests of Austria, who had abstained from it, and admitted Piedmont to the Congress of Paris; and, finally, when Napoleon instructed his Foreign Minister to bring the Italian question before the Congress.[1] The little kingdom which had been reduced to such extremities in 1848, and whose population, whose area, and whose resources seemed too small to enable it to play a great part in history, had suddenly been raised, by the ability of her Minister, to a position of influence in the councils of Europe.

The Congress of Paris.

The Congress of Paris failed to devise any remedy for the woes of Italy; but Lord Clarendon, who represented this country at it, placed on record an opinion, which must have been as displeasing to France and Austria as it was satisfactory to Count Cavour. 'Her Majesty's Government,' so he wrote, 'cannot hesitate to declare their opinion that the occupation of the Papal territory by foreign troops constitutes an irregular state of things, which disturbs the equilibrium, and may endanger the peace of Europe; and that, by indirectly affording sanction to misgovernment, it promotes discontent, and a tendency to revolution among the people.'[2] But Lord Clarendon's spoken language went beyond his written words. He described the Papal Government as the opprobrium of Europe. As to the King of Naples, if he did not soon mend his ways, and listen to the advice of the powers, it would become

Austria, *ibid.*, p. 112; and as a matter of fact, after the failure of the Vienna Conference in 1855, Count Cavour insisted that if Austria would not join the alliance, the allies should declare war against Austria. Piedmont accepted a loan of 2,000,000*l.* from this country for her expenses in the campaign. It has been repaid.

[1] De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. ii. p. 314 *seq.*

[2] Correspondence with Sardinia respecting the Affairs of Italy, *Parl. Papers*, 1856, p. 11.

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their duty to enforce it by arguments which he could not refuse to obey.[1] And after his return to England he took steps to show that the warning was not a mere warning of words. He addressed a remonstrance to the Court of Naples, which led to the withdrawal of the British Minister from that kingdom.

The policy of Count Cavour had given Piedmont a position in the councils of Europe, and had gained for himself repute as the only diplomatist alive;[2] but it had not added an acre to Piedmontese territory, or removed a single Austrian soldier from Lombardy or the Romagna. In the years which succeeded 1856, diplomacy was busy with the affairs of Moldavia and Wallachia.[3] France and Russia were in favour of the union of the principalities; Great Britain supported Austria and Turkey in resisting it. Count Cavour saw clearly that the cause of the principalities bore a close resemblance to the cause of Italy, and flung the weight of his influence into the policy of union. His conduct in doing so not unnaturally chilled the sympathetic warmth which Lord Clarendon had previously displayed. He thought that Count Cavour was thwarting his policy; he saw that, if a new war broke out in Eastern Europe, Great Britain would have to look to Austria for help; and he hesitated to take an active part against Austria on one question, when he was closely identifying himself with her views on another.

[1] Count Cavour said of Lord Clarendon's speech, that it might have been spoken by an Italian Radical. Countess Cesaresco's *Cavour*, p. 115. According to *Mazade*, pp. 137, 140, Lord Clarendon went still farther, and said to Count Cavour, 'Vous pouvez compter sur nous, et vous verrez avec quelle énergie nous viendrons à votre aide.' But, on reaching London, Count Cavour found that neither Court nor Ministry was prepared to go so far.

[2] 'La diplomatie s'en va: il n'y a plus maintenant en Europe qu'un seul diplomate, et malheureusement il est contre nous: c'est M. de Cavour.' Prince Metternich is the author of the saying; see Mazade, *La Vie de Cavour*, p. 187.

[3] I hope to deal with this subject in a later volume, in a chapter describing the progress of the Eastern question.

Italy, in these circumstances, had no immediate prospect of aid from England; she had no alternative but to wait for some fresh opportunity for bringing her griefs and her aspirations before Europe.

While she was thus waiting, Orsini and his fellow-conspirators threw their bombs under the Emperor's carriage. Their crime seemed, in the first instance, to make the cause of Italy more hopeless than ever. 'God grant that the criminals may not be Italians!' exclaimed Cavour when the news was brought to him.[1] Unfortunately they were Italians. It was only natural to suppose that the Emperor's sympathies for Italy would be weakened after the atrocious attacks by Italians on his own life; and, as a matter of fact, Count Walewski immediately addressed a remonstrance to Turin, in which he demanded severe measures of repression, while the Emperor himself told the Piedmontese Minister at Paris that Piedmont must choose whether she would range herself with him or against him. If she refused his demands, he would have no alternative but to ally himself with Austria, and to abandon the dream, to which he still clung, of giving independence to Italy.

The Emperor's demands on Piedmont in 1858.

Such language, such demands, might have caused hesitation in the councils of a state which had larger resources, and smaller ambition, than the little Piedmontese kingdom. Language, indeed, analogous in its character, addressed to this country, had been suffered to lie unanswered.[2] But the men who were responsible for the foreign policy of Piedmont in 1858 saw clearly that, much as the future of Italy depended on France, it depended still more on the courage of her own sons; and they replied in a letter which, if it had been written by Lord Clarendon, might have saved Lord Palmerston's Ministry from defeat. And the Emperor, to do him

[1] 'Pourvu que ce ne soient pas des Italiens.' *Mazade*, p. 195.
[2] *Ante*, p. 116.

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justice, was touched and moved by the manhood of the reply.[1] 'Votre roi est un brave : j'aime sa réponse.' So he said to the agent who read him the King's letter; and, though he thought proper officially to continue the remonstrances, he privately assured the King that the incident was closed.[2]

But there was another consideration, besides the King's courage, which was influencing the Emperor. Orsini was not the first Italian who had attempted the Emperor's assassination: he might not be the last to renew the attempt. For republican Italy undoubtedly considered that Napoleon was pledged to promote the independence of the country. Grave statesmen, indeed, who ought to have known, declared that the Emperor, in his youth, had joined the Carbonari, and that, in consequence, he was bound by the objects and penalties of that famous organisation.[3] At any rate, he sympathised with its principles and understood its power. So long as he did nothing, he feared that further attempts on his life would imperil his dynasty. And these fears

[1] The original explanation was sent by Count della Rocca, the veteran whose autobiography has recently been published. M. della Rocca's reception was not favourable, and Count Cavour then sent him a letter, signed by the King, and instructed him to have the 'imprudence' to read it to the Emperor. In this letter Victor Emmanuel said: 'Si les paroles que vous me transmettez sont les paroles textuelles de l'Empereur, dites-lui, dans les termes que vous croirez les meilleurs, qu'on ne traite pas ainsi un fidèle allié, que je n'ai jamais souffert de violences de personne, que je suis la voie de l'honneur toujours sans tache, et que de cet honneur je n'en réponds pas qu'à Dieu et à mon peuple: qu'il y a huit cent cinquante ans que nous portons la tête haute, et que personne ne me la fera baisser, et avec tout cela que je ne désire aucune chose que d'être son ami.' *Autobiography of a Veteran*, p. 131.

[2] Mazade, *La Vie de Cavour*, p. 202.

[3] See Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. i. pp. 138, 231, and Malmesbury's *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 458, and cf. pp. 466, 468. M. Guizot assumed that he was bound 'à ses anciens engagemens de Carbonaro.' Letter to Lord Aberdeen of the 4th of January, 1859. Countess Cesaresco says, 'All his [the Emperor's] friends belonged to the society, and it must always be held probable that he belonged to it also.' Cesaresco's *Cavour*, p. 131. M. Ollivier, on the contrary, gives some, not very convincing, reasons for an opposite opinion, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. ii. p. 28.

Count Cavour knew well how to stimulate. He saw that it would be not merely a crime, but a mistake, to kill the Emperor; but he saw also that much advantage could be gained by persuading him that he would be killed if he did not come to the assistance of Italy.[1] The Emperor was no coward; but the constant dread of assassination tells on the nerves of the strongest men.[2] If the weaker side of the Emperor's character was affected by apprehensions for his own safety, his better side was strangely moved by the appeal which Orsini himself made to him. Orsini was, no doubt, the greatest of criminals, but he had nothing of the squalor of the ordinary criminal about him. He would have said probably himself that, like Prince Bismarck, like Count Cavour, or even like Napoleon III., he had a cause to promote, and that the lives of a hundred innocent persons were only a small price to pay for its success. 'Let your Majesty remember,' so ran his appeal to the Emperor, which his counsel, by Napoleon's permission, read in court, and styled his testament, 'let your Majesty remember that the Italians, among whom was my own father, joyfully laid down their lives for the great Napoleon; that they were faithful to his cause to the hour of his fall. Let your Majesty reflect that peace cannot exist, either for your Majesty or for Europe, while Italy is enslaved. Let your Majesty accept the last prayer of a patriot on the foot of the scaffold, and win the blessings of twenty-five millions of citizens by the deliverance of their country.' He added after his sentence: 'In a few hours I shall be no more;

Orsini's appeal to the Emperor.

[1] 'He works the Orsini gang by saying, "Don't be such fools as to kill the only man who can help Italy, but frighten him into it."' *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 459; cf. Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. i. p. 291.

[2] A prince of the Church, devoted to Napoleon and highly esteemed by him, recommended to him on his death-bed the interests of the Holy See. 'Tout cela est vrai,' replied the Emperor, deeply agitated, 'mais vous ne savez pas ce que c'est que de vivre, comme moi, avec la pointe d'un poignard sur la poitrine.' *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 135.

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but, before I yield my last breath, I desire the world to know that, though, by a fatal mental error, I allowed myself to organise the attempt of the 14th of January, murder is no part of my principles. I yield my life as a sacrifice to the victims of that day; and I pray my fellow-countrymen, when they have won their independence, to offer full compensation to those who have suffered from my crime.'[1] By such language history is almost tempted to respect the criminal, while it detests the crime.

Influenced, at any rate, by the recollections of his own earlier aspirations, by fears for his own safety,[2] and by the appeal of his would-be assassin, the Emperor, who, from the beginning to the end of his career, loved to plot and to dream,[3] decided on drawing closer to Piedmont. Neither the world at large, nor the inner circle of his own Cabinet, was made acquainted with the alteration in his views. Unofficial agents, who enjoyed his confidence, and who were connected with Italy, were employed in these preliminary advances; but in these informal negotiations the expulsion of the Austrians from Italy was discussed; the union of the houses of Buonaparte and Savoy by marriage was suggested, and the famous meeting at Plombières between Napoleon and Count Cavour was arranged.[4]

[1] I have ventured to render, in a free translation, this remarkable language. The original words will be found in De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. ii. pp. 349–352.

[2] I do not forget that M. Ollivier (*L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iii. p. 546) regards it as a calumny to say that the fear of the assassin drove Napoleon to war; but, for the reason which I have given in the text, I must regard the fear of the assassin as one of the predisposing causes which led to the war of 1859.

[3] 'Rêveur et conspirateur toujours il fut sur le trône et toujours,' so writes M. de la Gorce in the work which is, at once, the example and the despair of a writer of recent history.

[4] The unofficial agents were Count Bixio, a friend of Prince Napoleon (see M. Rothan, *Revue des deux Mondes*, 1st of February, 1899, p. 542), and Dr. Conneau, who was ostensibly travelling for pleasure, by birth a citizen of Nice, married to a Corsican, the medical attendant of Queen Hortense, and the sharer of Napoleon's captivity in Ham. *Ibid.*, p. 543.

Thus it came to pass that, in July 1858, hardly six months after Orsini's attempt, Count Cavour left Turin for the fresh air of Switzerland. Not a soul in Paris, not a soul in Turin, save the King and General La Marmora, knew the true object of his journey. He wrote to one of his intimate friends and offered to pay him a visit at Geneva, his first halting place in a little tour which he contemplated making in Switzerland. He expressed to another friend his regret at being unable to visit him in France, as his presence in that country would give rise to endless conjectures.[1] He hardly trusted his hand with the knowledge of what his head was contemplating.

The meeting at Plombières.

After a short stay at Geneva, Count Cavour set out on the true object of his journey. Proceeding by a circuitous route, with a passport bearing a false name,[2] and reading, so far as he could find time to do so, the remarkable History which Mr. Buckle had just published, and which, in 1858, had soared to a reputation which was not destined to endure, Count Cavour reached Plombières on the 20th of July. From 11 in the morning till 3 in the afternoon he was closeted with the Emperor; and at 4, Napoleon, attended by a single servant, took his guest a long drive through the forests and valleys of the Vosges.

The responsibility for this famous interview must rest with Napoleon alone. His Ministers had no knowledge of it;[3] the discredit of it is the Emperor's; and it

[1] Mazade's *Cavour*, p. 213.

[2] De la Rive, who ought to know, says that he was 'muni d'un passeport, sur lequel son nom ne figurait pas, en secret,' &c., p. 384, in the English translation, p. 252. Mazade, who is followed by Countess Cesaresco, says that he had no passport, and was very nearly arrested in consequence, p. 213. How difficult it is to verify the simplest facts of history.

[3] So carefully had Napoleon kept the Plombières meeting from his Ministers, that, while Count Cavour was actually talking to the Emperor, the latter received a telegram from Count Walewski, which he opened, saying, 'Voilà Walewski qui m'annonce que vous êtes ici.' *Mazade*, p. 214. M. Rothan says that the telegram went on to warn the Emperor against Count Cavour, as a restless spirit who could not be

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is, perhaps, difficult to decide whether it does more discredit to his judgment or to his character.[1] To his judgment, for, closeted with the most dexterous player in Europe, he had the folly to commence the game by placing his whole hand on the table: he promised, at the outset, to support Piedmont with his whole strength in any war with Austria which was not revolutionary in its objects, and which could be justified in the eyes of diplomacy and in the opinion of the public. To his character, for he proceeded to ask Count Cavour to devise some pretext for a rupture which could satisfy these two conditions. Such a pretext could easily have been found by a statesman less fertile in resources than the Piedmontese Minister. As a matter of fact, it was discovered in the condition of Massa and Carrara. These places were part of the Duchy of Modena, and, like all Italian districts under the heel of Austria, were longing for liberty. There would be no difficulty—so thought Count Cavour—in inducing the inhabitants of these places to petition Victor Emmanuel, praying for his protection and for union with Piedmont. The King of Piedmont would not be rash enough to accept the territory, but he would address a firm note to the Duke of Modena.[2] The Duke, strong in the support of Austria, would naturally make a disdainful reply;[3]

trusted, and whose abilities made him the more dangerous. *Revue des deux Mondes*, 15th of February, 1899, p. 766. The *Times*' correspondent at Paris enclosed a letter which he had received from Plombières, in which the writer incidentally remarked that, 'except M. Cavour, who has been very well received by his Majesty, no political personage has obtruded on his [the Emperor's] retirement.' I have found no other contemporary allusion to the famous visit. See *Times*, 28th of July, 1858.

[1] I have founded my account of the famous interview on Count Cavour's own letters to Victor Emmanuel in the *Lettere di Cavour* vol. iii. pp. i–xiv. It differs in some slight respects from the accounts in *Mazade*, p. 214 *seq.*, and in *De la Rive*, p. 384, which have been accepted by M. Rothan. *Revue des deux Mondes*, 1st of February, 1899, p. 545.

[2] 'Une note hautaine et menaçante.' *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. iii.

[3] 'Y répondrait d'une manière impertinente.' *Ibid.*, p. iii. Count Cavour had years before made the fortification of Alessandria and the erection of an arsenal at Spezzia main objects of his policy.

Piedmont thereupon would occupy Massa, and war would begin. The expedient had the further advantage that, as any tourist who has travelled along the beautiful shores of western Italy knows, the white hills of Carrara rise not far from Spezzia, the best of Italian harbours, and Spezzia could easily be converted into a *place d'armes*, a base from which the armies of France might penetrate to the interior and operate on the right bank of the Po.

The conspirators—for it is difficult to apply to them any other name—having discovered a pretext for the war, on which they were resolved, proceeded to discuss its objects. The Emperor had no difficulty in pledging himself to drive the Austrians from Italy, and to leave them without an inch of land between the Alps and the Isonzo.[1] He had not much more difficulty in determining that the valley of the Po, the Romagna, and the Legations should be transferred to Piedmont, which should become thenceforward the kingdom of Upper Italy. Rome and the surrounding territory were to be left to the Pope. The kingdom of the Two Sicilies might remain intact, but its throne might be transferred to Prince Murat. Central Italy, including the States of the Church, might be formed into a fourth kingdom, which, Count Cavour suggested, and the Emperor readily grasped at the suggestion, might be placed under the Duchess of Parma.[2] The four kingdoms might be joined in a confederation under the presidency of the Pope, who, in this way, might be consoled for the loss of the greater portion of his States.

[1] The Isonzo for a short distance is the present eastern boundary of Italy; but, in other portions of its course, there is still a strip of 'Italia Irredenta' between it and the province of Venetia. The famous phrase, 'from the Alps to the Adriatic,' had apparently not occurred to Napoleon in July 1858.

[2] M. Rothan says that Count Cavour made this suggestion to divert the Emperor from the Murat project, being well aware of 'le faible de l'Empereur pour la Duchesse.' *Revue des deux Mondes*, 1st of February, 1859, p. 551.

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The conspirators had thus settled to their own satisfaction the future lot of Italy; but one of them, at any rate, was anxious about his own reward. What was France, asked the Emperor, to receive for her exertions? Would Victor Emmanuel give up Savoy and Nice? As for Savoy, said Count Cavour, Victor Emmanuel was ready to recognise that he could not take his stand on the doctrine of nationalities in Italy, and refuse to apply it to France; and, sad as it was to part from a country which was the cradle of his family, and from a people who had shown such devotion to his ancestors, he was ready to pay the price. The people of Nice, however, by their language, their origin, and their customs, were much more closely connected with Piedmont than with France. The very principle, therefore, which could be urged for the cession of Savoy, could be equally pleaded for the retention of Nice; and the Emperor, instead of making any reply, stroked his moustaches, and suggested that these subsidiary questions might be discussed later on.[1]

The four hours which Count Cavour had spent in the Emperor's closet had been tolerably fruitful; but the plotters had another three hours before them in the afternoon; and, the moment the Emperor's phaeton emerged from the streets of Plombières, he at once proceeded to refer to the marriage of Prince Napoleon with Princess Clothilde, the daughter of the King of Piedmont.

The Savoy marriage.

The project of this union had already been advanced by the Emperor; but the King had shown decided objections to sacrifice his daughter's happiness to his own ambition. Prince Napoleon's character was not good; he was old enough to be the Princess's father; and there seemed something odious in committing a young girl's happiness to the keeping of a prince

[1] *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. pp. v, vi. I have told the story of this famous interview as far as possible in Count Cavour's own language.

whose antecedents did not promise to make the union a happy one. At Plombières the Emperor showed great anxiety for the marriage, but he did not insist on it as an essential condition of the new alliance. Count Cavour, however, saw, or thought, that the Emperor's friendship would become perceptibly cooler if the marriage did not take place; and he set himself to convert his King to the expediency of sanctioning it. Probably in his inmost heart he thought it intolerable that the possible unhappiness of a young girl should be set against the happiness of millions of Italians. The Prince, he reminded the King, derived from his father the most glorious name in modern history; he was connected, through his mother, with the most illustrious families in Europe. Where was it possible to discern a more suitable husband for the King's daughter? The choice must necessarily be confined to the royal families of Europe who belonged to the Church of Rome; but the quarrel with Austria made it impossible to seek a husband in the House of Lorraine, and the alliance with France made it equally impossible to marry the young Princess to a Bourbon. Even had either of such alliances been admissible, the King need not go beyond the experience of his own relations to see how unhappy the marriages of princesses with princes of their own rank frequently were. The King's uncle and predecessor had four daughters. What had been their lot? The eldest, and least unhappy of the four, had married the Duke of Modena, a prince universally detested; the second had married the Duke of Lucca, and had been as miserable as it is possible to be in this world; the third had ascended the throne of the Cæsars, but as the wife of a Prince, *impotent et imbécile*, who had ignominiously descended from his high position. As for the fourth, the charming Princess Christine, the wife of the King of Naples, his Majesty knew the treatment

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to which she had been exposed, and which had brought her to the grave with the reputation of a saint and a martyr. What reason was there to suppose that Prince Napoleon would make a worse husband than these four princes of royal stock? It is true that the Prince had a bad name; but Count Cavour was satisfied that his character was much better than his reputation. He had been a good son, a good cousin, a faithful friend. If there was any doubt in the King's mind in this respect, let him reflect on his constancy to his friends and even to his mistresses. Why, the Prince had left Paris, in the midst of the Carnival, to pay a last visit to an old mistress dying at Cannes, whom he had not seen for four years.[1]

These arguments probably had great influence with the King of Piedmont. The man, in fact, who was authorising his Minister to seek a pretext for war, who was willing to part with the country which was the cradle of his family as the price of the French alliance, could not be over-scrupulous about a daughter's happiness. There were, however, other and more important matters for the conspirators to settle. Both of them desired to localise the war on which they had decided. The reputation of Austria was great; her position in Northern Italy, strong by nature, had been strengthened by art; and the master of many legions might fairly consider that it would be necessary for him to put forth his whole strength in a contest on Austrian soil with Austria alone. There was, however, always the danger that he would not have to deal with Austria alone. Germany, if Prussia gave the

[1] These arguments are all gravely set out by Count Cavour in his letter to Victor Emmanuel. The last—perhaps the strangest ever used on such an occasion—reminds one of the stories of George II. and Queen Caroline. The importance which Count Cavour attached to the marriage, may be inferred from his conversation with Count Pasolini: 'Now we have it; the marriage has been made on purpose. We make sure of aid from France, and all Italy is ripe for revolution.' *Memoirs of Count Pasolini*, p. 169.

sign, might move in Austria's support; and, if Germany or Prussia were to move an army towards the Rhine, the Emperor could not afford to concentrate his whole strength on the plains of Lombardy. It was therefore essential for the conspirators to arrive at some understanding with other European nations, and especially to ascertain the policy which Russia and Prussia might be expected to adopt. So far as Russia was concerned, Napoleon had reason to know that he had nothing to fear. Russia was grateful for the support which she had received from France and from Piedmont in the negotiations which succeeded the Congress of Paris in respect to Moldavia and Wallachia, and she was much more anxious to see Austria punished than to promote the cause of autocracy in Northern Italy. She promised to use all her influence not only in favour of Italy, but to prevent the intervention of Prussia.[1] From Prussia, however, the Emperor received a very different reply. In the autumn of 1858, the King of Prussia was compelled by his increasing infirmities to make his brother, Prince William, Regent of the kingdom, and, as the first act of his regency, Prince William replaced the Manteuffel Ministry with an Administration under the Prince of Hohenzollern.[2] Count Cavour soon appreciated the full effects of the change. 'The language of the new Ministry is not so explicit, and not so favourable, as that of its predecessor. The Hohen-

The overtures to Prussia and Russia.

[1] 'Lo Czar promise . . . tutta la sua influenza per impedire un intervento armato della Prussia a favore dell' Austria.' *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. xv. Lord Cowley, writing to Lord Malmesbury, said that Russia had undertaken, if the Emperor were compelled to take up arms, 'to give him all the assistance in her power by placing such an army on her frontier as will hold Austria and Prussia back.' Martin, *Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 353. This arrangement with Russia had been settled at an interview between the Czar and Prince Napoleon. For the details of Prince Napoleon's mission, see Emile Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iii. p. 500 *seq.*

[2] The appointment of Prince William as Regent will be found in the *Times* of the 12th of October; that of Prince Hohenzollern as Minister in the *Times* of the 4th of November, 1858.

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zollern Cabinet did not share the antipathy which estranged M. de Manteuffel from Austria;'[1] and, though Napoleon in conjunction with Count Cavour sent a secret agent to Berlin, the most that he could elicit from Prince Hohenzollern was a vague assurance of sympathy accompanied with an expression of his respect for the sanctity of treaties.[2]

There was one other country which it was also necessary for the conspirators to conciliate. At Plombières the Emperor had urged Count Cavour to use all his efforts to influence public opinion in England in favour of Italy.[3] As the autumn of 1858 advanced, however, he saw that both the English Court and the Conservative Ministry of Lord Derby were leaning towards the support of treaties and the Austrian alliance. In these circumstances, his best chance of the moral support of Great Britain apparently depended on the restoration of Lord Palmerston to power. Though the Foreign Minister, Lord Malmesbury, was his personal friend, the Emperor did not hesitate to inspire a series of attacks upon him in the British press;[4] and he took the unusual course of inviting Lord Palmerston and Lord Clarendon to Compiègne, and endeavouring to arouse their sympathies in the Italian cause.[5] But these expedients had no immediate effect. The British Court and the Conservative Ministry saw clearly enough that the first interest of this country was the interest of peace: they concluded that the best prospects of peace lay in a scrupulous adherence to the arrangements of 1815.

Thus, as the autumn of 1858 wore away, some fears

[1] *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. xvi. Von Gerlach, writing to Bismarck in 1855, described Manteuffel as 'before all things a Bonapartist.' *Bismarck, Reflections and Reminiscences*, vol. ii. pp. 116, 117.

[2] Mazade's *Cavour*, p. 217.

[3] *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. vi.

[4] *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, pp. 460, 462.

[5] Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. i. p. 297.

were felt in the chancelleries of Europe that complications might arise in the near future; and if the chancelleries of Europe had been better informed their fears would not certainly have diminished; for, early in December, the verbal arrangements which had been made at Plombières were reduced to writing, and incorporated in a short document contemplating the formation of a kingdom of Northern Italy, and the cession of Savoy and Nice to France. The whole arrangement, indeed, was made to depend on Austrian aggression, for it was only in the case of an attack by Austria on Piedmont that Napoleon undertook to interfere. The arrangement of December was kept as secret as the meeting at Plombières.[1] So little, indeed, were even well-informed people aware of what was going on, that, on the last day of 1858, the 'Times' was able to write: 'The rumours of possible hostilities between France and Austria are probably without any solid foundation, but they seem to indicate a diminished reliance on the prudence and moderation of the French Government.' On the morrow of the day, however, on which the 'Times' was reassuring its readers with this

The Emperor's speech to Baron Hübner.

[1] In this account I have followed M. Ollivier, who calls the arrangement a secret treaty (*L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iii. p. 522), and states that it was signed in December, and not, as is generally supposed, in the middle of the following January. *Ibid.*, p. 523, note; but cf. *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. xxxii, where it is distinctly stated that the alliance ('alleanza offensiva') was signed at Turin on the 18th of January. The arrangement, or treaty, so far as I know, has never been published; but I hesitate to believe that it took the shape of a formal treaty for the following reasons: (1) Though M. Ollivier ascribes the date of it to December, Count Cavour says that it was concluded in January. (2) Count Walewski was not acquainted with it till after its conclusion, and it is difficult to believe that a treaty could have been concluded without the signature of the Foreign Minister of France. (3) Count Walewski assured Lord Cowley on the 1st of May, 1859, that there was no such treaty (*Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 381); and, though in the atmosphere of deception it is difficult to know whom to trust, Count Walewski was a truthful man. See *supra*, p. 123. M. Ollivier, indeed, asserts that Count Walewski was in May still ignorant of the treaty of December. *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 179. On the whole facts it seems to me probable that the arrangement of the 18th of December, 1858, was followed by a more formal military convention in the following January.

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comforting reflection, the French Emperor, at his usual New Year's reception, was addressing the famous speech to Baron Hübner, the Austrian Ambassador at Paris, a diplomatist whom he personally disliked:[1] 'Je regrette que nos relations avec votre gouvernement ne soient plus aussi bonnes que par le passé.' It is said that, at the time, Baron Hübner did not attribute any serious importance to these words, and, as Lord Granville afterwards pointed out in the House of Lords,[2] it was obvious that they 'might mean everything or might mean nothing at all.' At Turin, Count Cavour naturally placed the most warlike interpretation on the Emperor's language. It showed, so he thought, that the Emperor was not only firm in his resolution to go to war, but that he actually desired to steal a march on his ally. 'The Emperor apparently wishes to walk in front,' was his commentary on Napoleon's speech.[3] But Count Cavour had no intention to allow his fellow-conspirator to take the lead. Much as he desired the assistance of France, he wished to retain for Piedmont a fair share of the credit attaching to his policy. He at once, therefore, regained the lead by overtrumping his partner's card. The Parliament of Piedmont was about to meet, the draft Speech from the Throne had been prepared and communicated to the Emperor, who had suggested some striking alterations in it, which had been adopted. The language of the speech was now again strengthened, and it ultimately ran: 'The political horizon, at the commencement of the new year, is not free from clouds.

The Speech from the Throne at Turin.

[1] 'Je déteste Hübner: s'il me demande quelque chose, je suis toujours tenté de lui refuser.' Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. i. p. 292.

[2] Lord Cowley, in reporting the interview, said that the words were: 'Although the relations between the two Empires were not such as he could desire, he begged to assure the Emperor of Austria that his personal feelings towards his Majesty remained unaltered.' *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 1; *Hansard*, vol. cliii. p. 30; cf. *Edinb. Rev.*, No. 378, p. 288, note.

[3] 'Sembra che l'Imperatore voglia andare avanti.' *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. xix.

Encouraged, however, by the experience of the past, we are prepared resolutely to encounter the eventualities of the future. That future will be happy because our policy is founded on justice, and on the love of liberty and of our country. Small as it is in territory, that country is great by the ideas which it represents, and the sympathies which it inspires. These conditions are not exempt from danger, since, while we respect treaties, we are not insensible to the cry of suffering which reaches us from so many parts of Italy. Confident in our union, relying on our right, we calmly await the decrees of Divine Providence.'[1]

The language thus deliberately used at Turin added emphasis to the words already spoken at Paris. The one seemed to explain the other. In Italy the 'grido di dolore,' in the original, was interpreted as 'a cry for aid, which is listened to by Piedmont, and which will be answered by French and Piedmontese cannon.'[2] The view which was thus expressed at Turin was adopted at Vienna, at Paris, and at every Court in Europe.

The marriage of Prince Napoleon and Princess Clothilde.

The sensation which was thus created was increased by the rumour that a marriage had been arranged, and would shortly take place, between Princess Clothilde, the daughter of the King, and Prince Napoleon, the cousin of the Emperor.[3] It was rightly assumed that the rumour explained the speech, and that the speech confirmed the rumour; and it was everywhere concluded

[1] For the modifications in the speech, see *Lettere di Cavour*, pp. xxiii–xxv. The words in italics were added after the Emperor had seen the draft. For the speech itself, I have ventured to amend the official translation. *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 17.

[2] Sir J. Hudson in *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 20.

[3] The intended marriage had been communicated privately to the Queen by the Emperor, on the 1st of January, in a letter ostensibly written to wish her joy of the new year. Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 343. Count Cavour was very angry at the premature disclosure of the marriage: 'Je ne sais quel indiscret l'a ébruité quinze jours trop tôt.' Count Cavour to M. d'Azeglio, 15th of January, 1859. *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. 16.

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that an alliance must exist between France and Piedmont, and that a new war would be the inevitable issue of the alliance. The money markets, both in Paris and London, reflected this conclusion, and the Prince Consort, writing to Baron Stockmar, declared that the fall in prices had involved a loss of 60,000,000*l.* in three days.[1] And the public had not to wait long for the confirmation of the rumour. On the 16th of January, Prince Napoleon, accompanied by Marshal Niel, arrived at Turin; on the 18th, a military convention was concluded between the representatives of the two Governments; on the 22nd, the Marshal formally demanded the hand of Princess Clothilde for Prince Napoleon; on the 30th, the marriage was celebrated; and on the 2nd of February, the newly married couple set out for Paris.[2]

But, while the Emperor had been slowly giving effect to the arrangements which he had made at Plombières, he was doing the utmost by his language to show his desire for peace. On the 7th of January, he sent a paragraph to the 'Moniteur' to reassure the public mind. For some days past—so this communication ran—public opinion has been agitated by alarming reports, which the Government feel bound to declare unfounded, as there is nothing 'in our diplomatic relations to justify the fears which the said rumours are

[1] Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 352. I take it that the Prince Consort obtained his information from the *Times*' City article, where the figure 60,000,000*l.* is given. See the *Times*, 12th of January, 1859.

[2] The convention of the 18th of January, supplemented by the arrangement already made in December (*vide supra*, p. 223), seems to have pledged France to come to the aid of Piedmont if she were attacked by Austria; to have arranged, in the event of a successful war, for the formation of a kingdom of Northern Italy; and to have provided for the cession of Savoy and Nice to France. It is right, however, to say that M. Chiala, in editing Count Cavour's letters, calls the convention a military alliance, and adds that the lot of Nice was reserved till the conclusion of peace. *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. xxxii. Count Walewski officially denied the existence of this treaty on the 1st of May. *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxi. p. 381.

calculated to produce.'[1] In announcing Prince Napoleon's marriage, he contradicted, in express terms, the report that the marriage had been accompanied by an offensive and defensive alliance with Piedmont.[2] In opening the French Chambers, on the 7th of February, he repeated the contradiction: 'The happy union . . . is not one of those unusual events for which one must seek for some hidden reason, but the natural consequence of the community of interests of the two countries, and of the friendship of the two Sovereigns.' He recalled to remembrance, on the same occasion, his celebrated declaration, 'L'Empire c'est la paix;' and he rhetorically concluded, 'Away with these false alarms, these unjust suspicions, these interested apprehensions! Peace, I hope, will not be disturbed. Resume, then, calmly the usual course of your labours.'[3]

The Emperor's pacific language.

In these declarations, which look so hollow when they are read in the light of the events which followed them, it must not be supposed that the Emperor was intentionally false. He was simply passing from a phase of resolution to a phase of irresolution. His desires were for peace: his anxieties made for war.[4] And just as, in 1858, the remembrance of his old dreams, and an apprehension for his own safety, had made it easy for Count Cavour to persuade him to war; so, in 1859, the con-

[1] See the *Times*, 10th of January, 1859.

[2] *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. xxxiv.

[3] *Ann. Reg.*, 1859, Hist., pp. 197–199.

[4] In an unpublished letter to Lord Aberdeen, M. Guizot wrote (24th of January, 1859): 'L'épicurien l'emporte en lui sur le rêveur, et pour jouir tranquillement de ce qu'il possède, il oublierait volontiers ce qu'il a médité et promis. Mais l'Empereur Napoléon est fort loin de s'appartenir pleinement à lui-même. . . . La crainte des assassins italiens l'obsède comme un cauchemar continu, et c'est pour écarter leurs coups qu'il prodigue à l'Italie les espérances.' A little later he wrote to the same correspondent (2nd of March, 1859): 'Il joue toujours ses deux rôles, le rôle d'empereur et le rôle de conspirateur; il flotte entre ses rêves et son épicurisme, ses passions d'autrefois et ses intérêts d'aujourd'hui.' I have to thank Lord Stanmore for giving me access to the extremely interesting correspondence of Lord Aberdeen, which I trust may some day be made public.

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dition of public feeling in Paris, which showed no enthusiasm for the campaign which the Emperor was supposed to be contemplating, and the increasing probability of Prussian intervention on the Rhine, when France was involved in a death struggle on the plains of Lombardy, disposed him to peace. He was probably ready to grasp at any means which would have extricated him from his embarrassment with honour to himself and with advantage to Italy. But escape was not easy. The strongest man in Europe held him in his toils, and kept him ruthlessly to the engagements to which he had been rash enough to commit himself; for, as the Emperor was pledged to come to the assistance of Piedmont if she were attacked by Austria, Count Cavour knew that he had only to provoke his opponent to an attack to insure the war from which he, at any rate, had no intention of shrinking.

Count Cavour's warlike policy.

Thus, while one conspirator was endeavouring by his language to dissipate the alarm which his actions were provoking, the other conspirator hardly tried to conceal the intention of his policy. Instead of attempting to explain away the Speech from the Throne, he gloried in the difficulties which he saw that he had created for Austria. 'The eventualities of the future,' so he wrote to the Piedmontese Minister, quoting the words of Victor Emmanuel's speech, 'will soon be developed, for we have placed Austria in an impasse from which she can only extricate herself by war.'[1] Secure in the knowledge that, if Piedmont were attacked, France was bound by her engagements to assist her ally, he set himself deliberately to irritate Austria into taking offensive measures. He realised from the first, as his great German successor realised some years afterwards, that

[1] 'Les éventualités de l'avenir ne se feront pas attendre, car nous avons placé l'Autriche dans un impasse, dont elle ne peut sortir qu'en tirant le canon.' *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. pp. xxv and 10.

he could so devise his plans that he could force Austria into a declaration of war at the moment most convenient to himself. On the 4th of February he asked for, and obtained, a loan of 50,000,000 francs;[1] on the 11th he admitted to a friend that recruits and deserters from the Austrian army were daily arriving from Lombardy, Parma, and Modena; and added that the recruits were being enrolled in the Piedmontese army, and that the deserters were placed in barracks at Cuneo. At the end of the month he summoned General Garibaldi, whose exertions in other countries in the cause of liberty had already made his name familiar as a formidable leader in guerilla warfare, told him that the long-expected day had at last come, that the patience of Austria was almost exhausted, and asked him to place his sword at the disposal of Italy.[2]

The military preparations of Austria.

The preparations of Piedmont, carefully devised to provoke, seemed in one sense justified by the military activity of Austria. Early in January, with the warning of Napoleon at Paris, and the echoing cry from Victor Emmanuel at Turin, ringing in her ears, she not unnaturally reinforced her army in Italy. During the following weeks it was further strengthened, and instructed to assume a position of offence on the banks of the Ticino. Austrian officers, quartered at Milan, had never been distinguished for the prudence of their language. In 1859 they spoke vauntingly of marching on Turin, as the first step in an advance towards Paris.[3] Everything, so these enthusiasts thought, was in favour of their striking hard and striking soon. The Piedmontese army could be destroyed while the snows of winter placed an almost impassable barrier between France and Pied-

[1] *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. xxxviii, and *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 41.

[2] 'Eh bien, général, le jour si longtemps attendu est arrivé : la patience du comte de Buol est presque épuisée. Nous avons besoin de vous.' *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. lxxxix.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. xxviii; Mazade, *La Vie de Cavour*, p. 229.

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mont. It seemed folly to wait till the return of spring reopened the passes of the Alps, and enabled Napoleon to move to the assistance of his ally.

The attitude of Great Britain.

While Austria was arming, and Piedmont replying by completing her preparations,[1] while Germany was seething with a desire to resist an attack by France on a German power, and while Russia, in professing an anxiety for peace, hardly tried to conceal her alienation from Austria, this country was labouring to prevent the outbreak of war. But, though the British people were unanimous in their desire to preserve peace, the Court, the Ministry, and the nation were divided in opinion as to the best means of doing so. The masses of the people sympathised with the aspirations of Italy, and would gladly have seen some peaceful expedient for relieving the Italian provinces from the presence of Austrian soldiery; the Court, on the other hand, sympathised strongly with the Austrian Emperor, and could not understand a desire to sacrifice the rights of a crown to the doctrine of nationalities. The Ministry, which shared the views of the Court,[2] took its stand on the treaties of 1815, and thought that the first duty of statesmen was to preserve a settlement which had given Europe nearly forty years of peace.[3]

[1] France, it ought also to be added, was making her preparations; but her Emperor seemed as anxious to conceal them, as his adversary and ally were to advertise their own. On the 2nd of January Marshal Vaillant, the Minister of War at Paris, instructed Marshal Castellane, who commanded the French troops at Lyons, to hold two divisions ready for embarkation at Marseilles. But these preparations were to be made in a way which would not compromise the Government. The men on furlough were not to be recalled; and, though troops were to be brought from Algeria to France, the public were to be induced to believe that reinforcements were about to be sent from France to Algeria. De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 4. Later on the despatch of reinforcements from Algiers could not be concealed. See, for example, a private telegram, announcing the departure of five regiments from Algeria, in the *Times* of the 9th of February, 1859.

[2] Sir H. Elliot, in his privately printed *Diplomatic Recollections*, p. 7, says that Lord Malmesbury's feelings were 'strongly' on the side of Austria.

[3] Lord Malmesbury's words are that 'the only security for peace is

Much, no doubt, can be urged for a Minister who takes his stand on treaties to which all the great powers of Europe have assented; but then the Minister who, in 1859, based his policy on the treaties of 1815, strangely overlooked the fact that he was virtually deciding an issue on which he was professing a wish to mediate. A man, endowed with more imagination than Lord Malmesbury, could hardly have failed to perceive that the treaties of 1815 were the fabric which Austria was trying to maintain, and which Piedmont, with the aid of France, was trying to destroy; for the treaties of 1815 gave Austria predominance in Italy, and it was for the removal of the Austrians from Italy that Count Cavour was prepared to stake the whole future of Piedmont. But Lord Malmesbury made another and a still more fatal mistake. Throughout the whole negotiation, in which he laboured with the efforts of an honest but unimaginative man to avert a war, he persisted in supposing that the principals in the coming contest were France and Austria. From the first to the last he failed to perceive that the command of the game was at Turin and not at Paris. He thought that he could frighten Count Cavour into a peaceful policy by telling him that Piedmont had much to lose and nothing to gain from a war in which she would supply a battle-field and be sacrificed as a victim. He thought that he might extinguish Italian agitation by securing the misgoverned provinces of Italy some salutary reforms through the joint co-operation of France and Austria.[1] He probably knew Montrose's famous lines,

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to be found in the strict and even the pedantic observance of those treaties.' *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 28.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 4 *seq.* I was very young in 1859; but I recollect one of Lord Malmesbury's colleagues saying to me that, whatever was the result of the war, it would be disastrous to Piedmont, as that power would be crushed between the two combatants. I have often thought the remark an indication that the Cabinet had no real clear knowledge of the whole conditions of the problem.

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but he could not understand that any contemporary statesman could be so ill advised as to apply them to his own policy. He had the superficial knowledge which the ordinary English gentleman possesses of history, and yet he seriously thought that the uprising of a people against foreign domination could be smothered by a mild measure of administrative reform.

Lord Cowley's mission to Vienna.

Yet, at one moment, he was deluded into believing that his well-intentioned efforts were about to succeed. In the middle of February, Napoleon, who had just startled Europe by authorising the publication of a tract advocating the reconstruction of Italy, announced through Count Walewski his readiness to accept the good offices of England; and Lord Cowley, the British Minister at Paris, was entrusted with a special mission to Vienna to induce Austria to make four concessions: (1) The simultaneous evacuation of the Roman States by both France and Austria; (2) the concession of administrative reforms in those States; (3) the securing improved relations between Austria and Piedmont; and (4) the abrogation of the treaties of 1847, which gave Austria the right, and imposed on her the duty, of interfering to suppress any popular expression of opinion in Central Italy.[1]

Lord Cowley, who was not much better informed of the true relations between France and Piedmont than Lord Malmesbury, had in the first instance some reason for congratulating himself on his success. The Emperor of the French showed himself, on one side, disposed to look favourably on the concessions which Lord Cowley was instructed to secure, and the Austrian Government showed itself, on the other side, prepared to discuss and give way upon them. But the Austrian Government,

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. pp. 48, 54 *seq.*; cf. *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, pp. 465, 472. Lord Cowley's special mission was announced in the *Times* of the 24th of February, 1859.

at any rate, was not ignorant of the chief condition of the problem which Lord Malmesbury and Lord Cowley were so persistently ignoring. The Austrian Minister, in fact, told Lord Cowley that he should have gone to Turin instead of coming to Vienna. Count Buol thus saw, what Lord Malmesbury failed to see, that the real control of the situation was neither in Paris nor in Vienna, but that it had passed into the hands of the statesman to whom Napoleon had given the commanding trump in the preceding autumn, and who was showing that he had courage to play, when the right time came, the card which his skill had secured.

For the moment, however, the comparative success which Lord Cowley had achieved seemed to have increased the chances of a peaceful issue; and the prospects of peace appeared the more favourable from the attitude and language of the French Emperor. Napoleon was still passing through one of those periods of vacillation which were the consequences of his character, and which perplexed his observers. The doubts which the hesitation of France, and the attitude of Prussia, were raising in his mind, were increased by the counsels of his Foreign Minister, Count Walewski, whose birth, whose position, and whose friendship gave him an exceptional influence.[1] Acting on Count Walewski's advice, in the beginning of March, while Lord Cowley was still at Vienna, Napoleon endeavoured to reassure his own people and to re-establish his own position in Europe by the insertion of some inspired sentences in the 'Moniteur.' The Emperor—so the communication ran—has nothing to conceal, nothing to disavow. The interests of France govern his policy and justify his vigilance. The Emperor has promised

The Emperor's communication in the 'Moniteur.'

[1] Count Walewski, it should be recollected, was a son of the First Napoleon. Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. i. p. 54. His second wife was a *persona grata* both to the Emperor and Empress.

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the King of Sardinia to defend him against any aggression on the part of Austria, and he has made no other promise. The world knows that he will keep his word. It is, no doubt, true that he carefully watches over the various causes which may disturb the political horizon. But to study such questions is not to raise them. Their examination has already passed into the region of diplomacy; and there is no reason for supposing that the issue will not be favourable to the preservation of peace.[1]

These words, which Count Walewski, a fortnight later, assured Lord Cowley 'gave the true colour' of his master's policy,[2] reaffirmed in the face of Europe the promises which the Emperor had already made to Victor Emmanuel and Count Cavour that he would defend Piedmont against Austrian aggression; but by publicly reaffirming them, and defining the exact nature of his pledge, he made the preservation of peace much more probable; for Austria, thenceforward, knew that, if she abstained from attacking Piedmont, she could rely on the neutrality of France; and she could fairly argue that, if she made the concessions which Lord Cowley was suggesting to her, she would deprive France of any excuse for continuing the controversy.

The King of Piedmont threatens that he will abdicate.

The Emperor's language in Paris, therefore, and the progress of Lord Cowley's mission in Vienna, equally pointed to a peaceful solution of the question in dispute; and this interpretation was adopted by the friends of Italy. Prince Napoleon, believing that the Emperor was abandoning the Italian cause, resigned his seat in his cousin's Cabinet, and told his Italian friends that the Emperor was betrayed by his Ministers.[3]

[1] *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. lxiv.

[2] *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 117.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 73, and *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. lxix. Prince Napoleon refused to withdraw his resignation unless the other Ministers were dismissed.

Victor Emmanuel, before he received the Prince's message, informed the Emperor that, if he were driven to abandon the cause of Italy, the loss would be much more fatal than the battle of Novara. 'For myself,' he added, 'I shall have no alternative but to follow the example of my father, and to lay down a crown which I could no longer wear with honour to myself and safety to my people; but, forced to renounce the throne of my ancestors, I shall owe it to myself, to the honour of my house, and to the welfare of my country, to let the world know the reasons which have compelled me to make the sacrifice.'[1]

The King's letter created a new apprehension in the Emperor's mind. There could be little doubt that, if he yielded to the pacific advice of his Foreign Minister, the King of Piedmont intended to appeal to opinion, and to publish the history of the secret negotiations of the preceding year. The world at large, so the Emperor feared, would in that case know that the Emperor, and not the King, had raised the Italian question at Plombières; that it was at the Emperor's request that Count Cavour had devised a pretext for hostilities; and that the Emperor had himself defined the scope of the war, and had named the price to be paid to him for his assistance. War, on the one side, dishonour on the other, were the alternatives which the Emperor had before him; and his best chance of escape seemed to lie in some fresh departure which might liberate him from the necessity of accepting the (in Italian eyes) unacceptable condition which Lord Malmesbury's intervention had imposed on him, and from incurring the risk of a war to which public opinion in France was opposed.[2]

[1] *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. lxvii; cf. Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 379.

[2] M. Ollivier says: 'Certainement, si le régime parlementaire eût existé alors, on eût renversé le ministère qui aurait proposé une guerre en Italie.' *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 94.

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Russia proposes a congress.

The means of escape were found in Russia. Either at the Emperor's suggestion, or of her own initiation,[1] Russia proposed to refer the Italian question to a congress of the five great powers.[2] Whatever else might ensue from this proposal, it did not require much perspicacity to see that it destroyed the effect of Lord Cowley's mission. It undid the work which he had been so laboriously doing. It created, however, the impression that war would be avoided. The 'Times' correspondent in Paris declared that he had very good reason to believe that peace would be maintained, and journalists busily occupied themselves with discussing the places at which the congress might meet, and the names of the statesmen who might take part in it.[3] Yet those who were behind the scenes hardly shared the confident expectations of such writers. Count Cavour, indeed, with much dexterity, at once offered to accept the suggestion if the composition of the congress were enlarged, and Piedmont herself were admitted to a seat in it. Count Buol, more grudgingly, expressed equal readiness to enter it if its scope were narrowed, and Piedmont should, as a preliminary measure, disarm. Lord Malmesbury, though naturally sore at a proposal which frustrated his previous efforts, consented to agree to it on condition that its deliberations were practically confined to the four points which Lord Cowley had already been instructed to press on the Austrian Government. Thenceforward, as a last hope of preserving peace, he laboured to find some compromise which might enable Austria and Piedmont to waive the conditions on which they were both insisting.[4]

[1] 'Soit qu'on l'en eût prié, soit spontanément.' Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iii. p. 56.

[2] *Parl. Papers*, Session 1859, vol. xxxii. pp. 117, 121.

[3] See the *Times* of 21st and 29th of March, 1859.

[4] Lord Malmesbury said: 'Her Majesty's Government cannot agree to any discussion respecting the Austrian territory as given to her by the treaties of 1815; the only questions which they can entertain are the evacuation of the Roman

In these negotiations, Lord Malmesbury repeated the mistake which he had made from the first. He continued in the belief that he could secure peace by inducing Austria to make concessions which would satisfy Napoleon.[1] He failed to see that the great Italian Minister stood behind Napoleon's chair, and compelled the Emperor to play the cards of his own choosing. The true aspect of the question was, indeed, obscured from Lord Malmesbury's vision by the language which Napoleon permitted his Minister to use. Count Walewski, honestly desirous of peace, and in ignorance of the pledges of Plombières, shared Lord Malmesbury's conviction that peace might be insured by persuading Austria to be moderate and by compelling Piedmont to give way. On the 20th of March he told the Sardinian Minister at Paris that the Emperor was not going to make war to satisfy the ambition of Piedmont, and that everything could be arranged at a congress to which Piedmont had no right to claim admission. On receipt of this intelligence, Count Cavour desired his secretary, M. Nigra, to see the Emperor and declare that the language of Count Walewski was driving Piedmont to desperation. He followed up his letter by going himself to Paris,[2] where he told Count Walewski and the Emperor that the policy of France would force Victor Emmanuel to abdicate and himself to resign.[3] In

States, reform, guarantees of peace between Austria and Sardinia, and an arrangement to be substituted for the treaties of 1847 between Austria, Parma, and Modena.' *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 109; cf. p. 200. For the Austrian and Piedmontese conditions, *ibid.*, pp. 140, 178.

[1] Lord Malmesbury, at the end of March, wished France to join with England in insisting on the disarmament of Piedmont, on condition that Austria would accept the four points, and act on her own promise of disarmament. *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 133.

[2] *Mazade*, pp. 245, 246.

[3] M. Rothan, in the *Revue des deux Mondes*, in April 1899, pp. 597–603, says that Count Cavour added that, on his resignation, he should go to America and publish there the details of the plot, and so justify his policy. M. Emile Ollivier, on the contrary (*L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iii. p. 562, note), not only denies this, but adds that Count Cavour, even in his anger, would not have been guilty

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vain the French Minister endeavoured to reconcile him to the idea of a congress, and to persuade him that there was nothing derogatory to Piedmont in a congress where she would have no vote, but where her representative would have a voice, like the Dutch plenipotentiaries in the conference of London in 1831.[1] His arguments were addressed to deaf ears. Count Cavour did not want a congress, he wanted war;[2] and he was not likely to make any concession which rendered war less probable.

If Count Cavour clung with pertinacity to his own condition that there should be no congress unless Piedmont were a party to it, he resisted, with equal vigour, the condition of Austria that Piedmont should disarm before the congress met. 'We will not discuss it,' so he passionately declared. 'Better far to fall defeated with arms in our hands, than to consent to a disarmament which will deprive Italy of all hopes, and Piedmont of the moral force which her preparations have secured for her.'[3] There were, therefore, two points to be overcome before even the possibility of holding a congress could be determined; and behind these two points a still larger obstacle loomed in the distance, for the question whether the congress should meet was obviously of far less importance than the further question what the congress should do. Was there the slightest chance that Austria would consent to the enlarged discussion

of such folly. It is not for an Englishman to decide between two well-informed French writers; but it seems to me that there is nothing inconsistent with Count Cavour's character in supposing him to have uttered some such threat. M. Chiala, in the *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. xcvi, makes the same statement as M. Rothan, and is probably the authority for M. Rothan's story.

[1] Rothan, *Revue des deux Mondes*, 1st of April, 1899, p. 599; cf. an account of Lord Cowley's interview with Count Cavour in *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 156.

[2] He declared at this time, 'qu'il aurait la guerre en dépit de tous les congrès.' *Revue des deux Mondes*, 1st of April, 1899, p. 603; cf. Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 416.

[3] Cf. *ibid.*, p. 422; *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. 58; and *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 170.

of the treaties of 1815, on which it was certain that Count Cavour would insist? Was it even possible for Lord Malmesbury to recommend her to yield on this point, when he had himself stipulated that the congress should confine its labours to the four points which Lord Cowley had formulated at Vienna? Lord Malmesbury hardly ventured to approach this the real issue in his persevering struggle for the maintenance of peace.[1] He grappled with the immediate obstacle before him with the zeal of the mountaineer, who is not disheartened by the prospect of the higher alp which he knows that he will see on attaining the summit of the range which he is ascending; and perhaps the knowledge that this further obstacle would have to be surmounted, made it a little easier for him to compromise the immediate difficulty. At any rate, by the middle of April, he succeeded with the assistance of Napoleon in persuading Count Cavour that, in lieu of the Austrian condition that Piedmont should disarm, a general disarmament should take place; and that, instead of the original proposal that the congress should be confined to the representatives of the five great powers, all the Italian States should be admitted to it on the footing on which they had taken part in the Congress of Laybach in 1821.[2] In reluctantly assenting to these conditions on the pressure of Napoleon, Count Cavour probably saw that, while strengthening his own moral position by displaying a readiness to give way, he yielded nothing of importance to Piedmont. A general disarmament would obviously

Count Cavour accepts the congress.

[1] 'Jamais apôtre n'avait prêché la paix avec plus de ferveur et de persévérance que Lord Malmesbury.' M. Rothan in *Revue des deux Mondes*, 1st of April, 1899, p. 610. *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. pp. 190, 232, 268, 273. Lord Malmesbury had previously offered, if Sardinia disarmed, to protect her from any attack by Austria. 'Happily,' so the *Times* wrote on the 19th of April, 'that sturdy and pugnacious little state objected to be thus mediatised.'

[2] At Laybach, the representatives of the Italian States were heard at the deliberations of the congress, but had no voice in its counsels. See Lord Malmesbury's speech, *Hansard*, vol. cliii. p. 1837.

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be a more serious matter for a country like Austria, which was relying on the support of a highly organised army, than for a country like Piedmont, largely dependent on the voluntary uprising of its population. A congress, in which all the Italian States sat, and in which above all he was himself present, would have means of raising the Italian question in a form which would attract the attention of Europe; and, above all, concession on these two points did not bring the meeting of the congress appreciably nearer; for, if Lord Malmesbury had occupied weeks in arranging the composition of the congress, months of weary negotiation might be expended in defining the scope of its duties.

Moreover, Count Cavour knew that the patience of Austria was rapidly giving way, and that neither her pride nor her resources would suffer her to submit much longer to the humiliating and costly position in which she was placed. As far back as the preceding December he had predicted that he would force her to declare war about the first week of May,[1] and he was already in the middle of April. Unless, therefore, he had miscalculated the effect of his policy—and Count Cavour rarely made a miscalculation—he had not much longer to wait for the war which he desired. In fact, it came a little quicker than he had anticipated; for, on the very day[2] on which Lord Malmesbury thought that he had brought the long negotiation to the verge of a successful issue,[3] Austria sent an ultimatum to Piedmont, calling on her to disarm, and to return her answer within three days.

The Austrian ultimatum.

[1] See the reference to his conversation with Mr. Odo Russell, Cesaresco's *Cavour*, p. 135.

[2] Austria communicated to the Austrian Ambassador in London her intention to address this ultimatum to Piedmont on the 12th of April. *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 246.

[3] So confident were the expectations of peace, that the *Times* wrote (22nd of April), 'We were compelled, within the course of the same morning, to hold out a promise of almost certain peace, and to withdraw the promise and to substitute for it the probability of almost instant war.'

In the long and anxious interval between the Emperor's address to Baron Hübner and the Austrian summons to Piedmont, Count Cavour had displayed, over and over again, a superiority to Count Buol, the statesman who presided over the Austrian Cabinet; but in no part of the long struggle had Count Cavour shown more skill than in the conclusion of it. By making the slightest and most unimportant of concessions, he had succeeded in persuading Europe that he was on the side of moderation, while by irritating Austria into delivering an ultimatum he had thrown on her the whole responsibility for the war which was to ensue; for so unjust is public opinion, that it is the Minister who declares war, and not the statesman who provokes it, who is uniformly held responsible for its outbreak.

The moral advantage which Count Cavour thus secured was especially apparent in this country. Lord Malmesbury had, throughout the negotiations, made the mistake of overlooking the fact that its issue depended on the decision of Turin, and not on that of Paris and of Vienna. In annoyance at his failure, he equally ignored the fact that, however greatly Count Buol may have blundered, the war was the war of Count Cavour. Thus thinking, he registered a strong protest against Austria's action.[1] His chief, Lord Derby, speaking at the Mansion House, used even stronger language. 'There was nothing,' so he said, 'to justify the hasty, the precipitate, and—because involving the horrors of war—the criminal step which had been taken by Austria.' The Queen, writing to the King of the Belgians, said the same thing: 'It is the madness and the blindness of Austria which has brought on the war now. She has thus put herself in the wrong, and entirely changed the feeling here into the most

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 289.

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vehement sympathy for Sardinia.'[1] If these were the views of the friends of Austria—and Lord Malmesbury, Lord Derby, and the Queen were the three most influential friends whom Austria possessed in Western Europe—it is easy to imagine the feelings of those who had, from the first beginnings of the dispute, been disposed to sympathise with the aspirations of Italy. But the moral victory which Count Cavour thus gained was not the only advantage which he secured from Count Buol's precipitate blunder. It gave Prussia an excuse for withholding material support from an ally who, in the sight of Europe, had put herself in the wrong,[2] and it compelled France to redeem her promises and to move at once to Piedmont's support.

In truth, Count Buol had allowed his cool antagonist to score one more advantage in the game which he was so patiently playing. War was the only means, so Count Cavour thought, by which the end at which he was aiming could be secured; and the Austrian ultimatum brought him nearer to his goal. He and his King were the two men in Europe who were most eager for the war which Count Buol was forcing on.

[1] Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. iv. pp. 428, 429.

[2] The policy of Prussia was largely influenced by the advice of the Prince Consort, who from the first advised Prussia to play a waiting game. 'In the case of war breaking out, I should place the army upon a war footing, and occupy the fortresses, giving at the same time friendly assurances to all the Courts. Even although Austria should be attacked in Italy by France, prudence would dictate that the struggle should not, without absolute necessity, be drawn towards the Rhine. Should Austria come to grief in the campaign . . . Prussia and Germany would always have time to take part in the war with advantage, before France could have so cleared her hands of the Austrians that she could launch all her force against Germany.' Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. iv. pp. 385, 386. It is clear that the Prince Consort made exactly the same miscalculation that Napoleon made afterwards in 1866. He thought that the war would be a long one; and that a neutral power could intervene with more advantage at a later stage. Prince Bismarck was in favour of a very different policy. He wished Prussia to declare in favour of Italy against Austrian predominance. *Bismarck, Reflections and Reminiscences*, vol. i. pp. 307, 308. But Prince Bismarck had not attained a position in 1859 which enabled him to enforce the adoption of his advice.

But their attitude was very different. The King was 'sweating' with rage;[1] his Minister, cool and imperturbable, calmly noting the exact hour at which the ultimatum was handed to him, and telegraphing to Paris for 50,000 men.[2] At the precise hour indicated he was handing to the Austrian envoy his reply, in which the responsibility of the rupture was thrown upon Austria, and expressing a hope that the envoy and he might meet in happier circumstances. And, when the envoy had withdrawn, he said quite quietly to his friends, 'The die is cast; we have made history; and now let us go to dinner.'[3]

The military blunders of Austria.

One excuse might have been urged for the unwise and impolitic summons which Austria had addressed to Piedmont. Her military superiority could remain only while Piedmont stood alone against her. Her interest, therefore, suggested that she should crush her antagonist before France could cross the Alps. On the 26th of April, when the summons expired, the Austrians had an army of 110,000 men, with 400 guns, on the Ticino; and the line of the Dora Baltea, which covered Turin on the north-east, was protected by only 30,000 Piedmontese. Even when Marshal Canrobert, a week later, reached the scene of war with the first French reinforcements, he concluded that the line of the Dora Baltea could either be turned by an attack on the flank or carried by an attack on the front, and that it was necessary to abandon it. It is hardly doubtful, therefore, that, if the Austrians had advanced on the 27th of April, they must have succeeded in crushing the feeble force which was all that Piedmont could oppose to them, in taking Turin, in advancing to Susa, and in destroying

[1] 'Je suis tout sué de rage. Cher Cavour, écrivez-moi quelque chose. Je voudrais déjà tirer le canon ce soir.' *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. cxxxv note.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. cxliii and note; *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxi. p. 345.

[3] *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. pp. cxlvi, cxlvii; Countess Cesaresco's *Cavour*, p. 148.

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the French left as it debouched through the defiles of Mont Cenis.

'But the Austrians did not take this course. The man who was in command of the army, Marshal Giulai, had a fixed opinion that the Austrian army, instead of advancing, should return to the Quadrilateral. Imbued with these views, he rejected the advice which his Emperor and younger men were pressing on him. And the Emperor and his staff, still clinging to their own opinions, had neither the courage to remove the Marshal, nor the wisdom to leave him to carry out his own plans. They sent him, as chief of his staff, a young officer with special orders to persuade the Marshal to take a more vigorous offensive. Urged forward in this way, Giulai on the 8th of May gave orders for an advance which, if it were made at all, should have been undertaken on the 27th of April. His troops reached the banks of the Dora Baltea. Finding it abandoned, Marshal Giulai was frightened into the belief that he was to be attacked in flank. The appearance of a few soldiers in the red trousers of the French army increased his apprehensions. He returned at once to his old idea, and gave the order to retreat. He had justified once more the saying of Napoleon: 'In war the Austrians always commit an irreparable blunder: they never know how to profit from time.'[1]

The French move in support of Piedmont.

The French, on their part, did not make a similar mistake. On the 23rd of April, Count Cavour had applied for the assistance of France. On the same evening the French army was ordered to move. On the 30th the first French troops reached Turin. On the 3rd of May the Emperor addressed a communication to his Legislature in which he used the famous phrase:

[1] 'Ils ne savent jamais profiter du temps.' M. Ollivier in *Revue des deux Mondes*, 1st of May, 1899, p. 37. I have freely availed myself of M. Ollivier's article in these accounts. Since my narrative was written, the article has been incorporated in *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 128 *seq.*

'Austria has brought matters to this extremity: that either she must rule up to the Alps, or Italy must be free to the shores of the Adriatic.' On the 10th he left Paris, and on the 12th he disembarked at Genoa.[1]

The declaration of war had an immediate effect on opinion in Paris. All parties had hitherto deprecated hostilities. But the moment that war was declared, enthusiasm succeeded discontent. Even the small group of Liberals in the Chamber of Deputies—the Five as they were called from their number—did not venture to oppose the popular sentiment. 'If you go to destroy the despotism of Austria, my heart, my blood, my goods [*tout mon être*] are yours,' said M. Jules Favre, the most eloquent of the Five.[2] 'The Emperor,' wrote M. Mérimée to M. Panizzi, 'has set out to-day. He was taken to the station amidst the frantic cheers of an enormous crowd. . . . He is more popular than ever.' 'We are a funny nation,' he wrote again. 'I told you a fortnight ago that there was only one man in France who wanted war, and I thought I told you the truth. To-day, the people accept the war with joy. They are full of confidence and enthusiasm. And as for the soldiers, you would think that they were going to a ball.'[3] Almost the only man, in fact, who did not share the universal enthusiasm was the Emperor, who was responsible for the war. He knew, as the people did not know, the defects of his military organisation, into which commission after commission had inquired, and which commission after commission had failed to amend.[4] He knew, as the people did not know, that the danger to be faced was not on the Ticino, but on the Rhine; and that, in a few months'

[1] *Ann. Reg.*, 1859, Hist., pp. 231, 236; Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. pp. 110, 135; *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. clxix.

[2] M. Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 105, and see *ibid.*, p. 111.

[3] *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. clxix, note. M. Rothan in *Revue des deux Mondes*, 1st of April, 1899, p. 615.

[4] 'La question s'éternisant dans des commissions.' M. Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 116.

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time, he might have all Germany on his hands.[1] The fear which made him close the war in July, and which accompanied him throughout the campaign, was present to him when he left Paris, to redeem his pledges, in May.

To do him justice, if he were suffering from grave apprehensions as to the future, he betrayed no symptoms of it on his arrival at Genoa. If in his conduct of the campaign he showed none of his uncle's genius, his plans were soundly conceived and cautiously executed. He deserves, at least, this measure of approbation. He did not make the mistakes which spoiled the strategy of his enemy.

The campaign of 1859.

The general idea of the campaign was simple. The river Po, in its course from west to east through the plains of Northern Italy, is fed on its left bank, after leaving Turin, by the Dora Baltea, the Sesia, the Agogna, the Ticino, the Adda, by the joint waters of the Oglio and the Chiese, by the Mincio, and the Adige. The Ticino, the old frontier of Lombardy, was held at the outset of the campaign by the Austrian troops. The city of Pavia, where Francis I., centuries before, had lost everything but his honour, stands near the point at which the Ticino joins the Po; the strong fortress of Piacenza was still lower down the course of the river between the mouth of the Ticino and the mouth of the Adda. At the outset, Marshal Giulai established the Austrian army between the Sesia and the Ticino; and the Emperor, who concentrated his forces at Alessandria, decided, in the first instance, to advance by Piacenza, to turn the Austrian left, and threaten the line of Marshal Giulai's retreat. Marshal Giulai, however, divined the Emperor's intentions: his suspicions were confirmed by a reconnaissance in force on the south of the Po, which brought on the first engagement of the war, the battle of Montebello; and he met his

[1] M. Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 120.

opponent's plans by altering his own position and by guarding the line of the Po from Piacenza to Pavia. The Emperor thereupon made a radical alteration in his own plans. Thinking it impossible to force his passage over so large a river as the Po at Piacenza in the face of a powerful enemy, he decided on abandoning his attempt on the enemy's left, and on transferring the weight of his attack to the Austrian right, which rested on the Sesia near Vercelli. The movement was not free from risk, but it was promptly executed and successfully carried out. The King of Piedmont seized and held Palestro, which stands on the left bank of the Sesia nearly opposite Vercelli.[1] His success assured the allied armies a safe passage across the Sesia, and enabled the Emperor to advance by the direct route on Milan. Marshal Giulai, to arrest this advance, withdrew his army across the Ticino, endeavouring to obstruct the French by a flank attack at a place, destined to be famous in history, Magenta. There, on the 4th of June, was fought the third, and so far the most important, battle of the war. For long hours, the result was in doubt, the French ultimately obtaining the mastery by the superiority of their artillery and the freer movements of their soldiers; for on that day, as on the day of Inkermann, four or five years before, it was seen that troops fighting in close order cannot hold their own against skirmishers, taught to avail themselves of every protection which the ground can offer, and to trust to their own individual resources in the hour of danger.[2]

[1] It was on this occasion that the Zouaves, charmed with Victor Emmanuel's gallantry, conferred on him the rank of corporal. Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 150.

[2] 'Si les Autrichiens avaient su comme nous se déployer en chaîne épaisse de tirailleurs, agir d'une manière indépendante et libre, profiter des accidents du terrain pour s'abriter et bien ajuster, s'avancer ou se replier avec rapidité, ils seraient parvenus, par un emploi judicieux de leur fusil, supérieur au nôtre, à compenser l'infériorité de leur artillerie.' Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 169; cf. M. de la Gorce's account of the battle

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Closely as the battle had been contested, serious as were the losses on both sides, the material and moral advantages were on the side of the French. In a little more than a month, Marshal Giulai had withdrawn his battalions from the Dora Baltea to the Sesia, from the Sesia to the Ticino, and he now at once ordered a further retreat to the Adda and to the Chiese. The retreat necessitated the abandonment of Pavia and Milan, and, on the 8th of June, four days after the battle, the Emperor entered the ancient capital of Lombardy. The liberation of Lombardy was naturally received with enthusiasm by a liberated people. Joined, however, on the following day by Count Cavour, the monarch found that the cheers, with which he had been received, were forgotten in the reception which awaited the statesman. The Milanese had the perspicacity to see that the man who had planned, and not the man who had dealt the blow, deserved their chief acknowledgments.[1]

The allies enter Milan.

While Napoleon was entering Milan amid the cheers of the citizens, the sound of distant cannon announced the progress of a fresh engagement. Marshal Giulai had, in fact, left a small corps to cover his retreat at a place called Melegnano. The presence of this corps, between the Ticino and the Adda, led to the fourth action of the war. General Baraguay d'Hilliers commanded on the French right, while General Mac-Mahon—whose conduct at Magenta had just been rewarded by a field marshal's bâton—was ordered to threaten the Austrian line of retreat by a movement on their flank and rear. General Baraguay d'Hilliers, a little impatient of the success which his colleague had

in *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 39 *seq.* In a history of England I have not thought it right to do more than indicate the barest outline of the strategy of the campaign.

[1] De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 56; cf. Countess Cesaresco's *Cavour*, p. 149, and *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. clxxvii and note.

achieved, and anxious to secure the whole honours of the day for himself, commenced his attack before his colleague had time to develop his flanking movement. In consequence, though he ultimately carried the Austrian position, his success was purchased at a price which robbed the victory of its significance.

The command of the Austrian army transferred.

In fact, though the Austrians had been worsted in four engagements, though they had sustained the moral discomfiture which inevitably attends continuous retreat, their army was still unbroken and leisurely retiring beyond the Chiese. There Marshal Giulai prepared to make his stand; and there, hearing that his supersession was imminent, he resigned his command. The Emperor of Austria thereupon divided his army into two divisions, which he entrusted to General Wimpffen and General Schlick. He kept in his own hands the supreme command, appointing Marshal Hess the chief of the staff.[1]

In war—if the striking phrase of a great statesman is permissible—it is usually a fatal error to swop horses when you are crossing a stream; but the error becomes more signal when, as in the case of Austria in 1859, the responsibility which is taken from one chief is distributed among his successors. Yet both these mistakes were committed by the Emperor of Austria. He changed his leaders at the most critical moment of the campaign, and he diffused the responsibility among many counsellors. The consequences of this policy were almost immediately visible. A sharp difference of opinion, at once, arose between Marshal Hess and General Schlick. The Marshal, dissatisfied with the position on which his predecessor had intended to make his stand, proposed to retreat, once more, to the line of the Adige. The General wished to arrest the

[1] Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 191; cf. De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 72.

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retreat on the heights of Castiglione, which crown the left bank of the Chiese. Marshal Hess's advice prevailed; and, on the 20th of June, the Austrians crossed the Mincio. The retirement, however, had no sooner been completed, than it was regretted as a mistake; and, on the 23rd of June, the troops were ordered to recross the Mincio, and occupy the old line which they had abandoned.[1] But the movement was too late; the French had already crossed the Chiese, and were encamped on its left bank. It was certain that a new battle had to be fought on the ground that lies between the valleys of the Mincio on the east and of the Chiese on the west. There, on the 24th of June, the battle of Solferino was fought. The French, for the fifth time in the war, stood victors on the well-contested field; but the loss of the allies in killed and wounded was equal to the loss of the Austrian army.

The successes of the allies.

In every one of the battles which had thus been fought, fortune had been on the side of the allies, and in each of them they had reaped the full fruits of success; yet in all of them the struggle had been severe, and the result had been long in suspense. At Solferino, the right wing of the Austrians had gained the advantage over the Piedmontese who were opposed to it; and its commander, General Benedek, was so convinced of the capacity of his troops, that he proposed, on the morrow which followed the battle, to renew the combat. It is never wise to argue on the 'what might have been;' yet it seems possible that, if General Benedek's advice had been taken, the course of history might have been entirely changed; for on the morrow of the battle some French cavalry, sent forward to reconnoitre, mistook some Austrian fugitives, seeking their way towards the Adige, for an Austrian division advancing against them. Seized with a sudden panic,

[1] De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 192.

they communicated their alarm to the brigade which supported them, and the whole brigade galloped back in disorder to the camp. The panic which so unaccountably seized the cavalry was felt in the camp. The artillery cut their traces and abandoned their guns; the drivers of the ambulances threw the wounded out of the wagons and hurried away; and, though order in the camp was promptly restored, those who had horses to ride did not draw rein till they reached Brescia. The inhabitants of the intervening districts, convinced of a great disaster, replaced the tricolours, which they had unfurled on the French advance, with the Austrian colours![1]

If, at that moment, General Benedek's advice had been taken, and a strong attack had been made on the French position, it seems reasonable to suppose that the panic, which had arisen without cause, would have been confirmed, and that the arms of Austria would have won an easy victory over their antagonists. The Emperor of Austria, however, refused the advice which General Benedek gave to him, Shocked at the awful carnage of a battle-field, on which official figures admitted an Austrian loss of 13,500 men killed and wounded,[2] he replied with tears in his eyes, 'Better lose a province than be present again at so awful a spectacle.' The Emperor's words do credit to his heart. But it is the misfortune of the human race, that those who are respon-

[1] I should hesitate to insert this account of this panic if I did not do so on the authority of a French author. I have given the account almost in M. Ollivier's language. *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 207.

[2] M. Ollivier admits that at Solferino alone the allies sustained a loss of 2,313 killed, 12,102 wounded, and 2,776 missing. *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 205; cf. De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 95. Count Vitzthum says: 'The campaign has cost the French army—to say nothing of the Sardinian one, which is almost broken up—in round numbers 100,000 men in dead, sick, and wounded.' *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. i. p. 364. The Emperor, in talking to Lord Malmesbury, two years afterwards, spoke of 'a loss of 50,000 of my soldiers.' On the same occasion he confessed to a loss of 17,000 prime troops at Solferino.

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sible for policy seem incapable of realising the horrors of war until they see them with their eyes. Had some great word painter succeeded in April in representing to the Emperor the horrors of a battle-field, on which 3,000 of his subjects were lying dead, and 10,000 or 11,000 others, more unfortunate, were suffering the tortures of wounded men, his heart might have prevailed over his head, and he might have withheld the ultimatum, the immediate cause of so many horrors.

The Emperor of Austria was not the only person whose heart was touched by the horrors of a hotly contested battle-field. The Emperor of the French was equally moved by the spectacle of suffering. 'Les pauvres gens! les pauvres gens! quelle horrible chose que la guerre!'[1] So he was heard to say more than once at Solferino. He did not, indeed, make the mistake which his brother Emperor committed, of allowing his heart to master his head. On the contrary, he gave immediate orders for hurrying up his siege train, for pressing forward reinforcements, and he directed his fleet, already in the Adriatic, to commence operations at Venice. The best chance of stopping bloodshed, he knew, lay in displaying fresh proofs of energy. Yet, while he was giving these orders, his mind was deeply occupied with the possibilities of peace; and peace seemed to him an urgent necessity, for, victor though he was on five battle-fields, his dynasty and his empire were trembling on the brink of overthrow.

The Emperor's anxiety for peace.

In Italy things were going, in one sense, too well. Napoleon had been ready to constitute a greater Piedmont in Northern Italy; but it was already evident that the flood, which he had set in motion, was sweeping away the old landmarks in other places. The Romagna had thrown off its allegiance to the Pope; duke and archduke had abandoned their duchies; and Tuscany

[1] Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 221.

and the Romagna, equally with Parma and Modena, were showing a strong determination to throw in their lot with Piedmont.[1] If the war were to go on, the Emperor, instead of creating a kingdom of Northern Italy, might find himself face to face with a united Italy. All the wisest heads in France were impressed with the folly of creating a powerful kingdom, a new Prussia, on her south-eastern frontier; yet the war on which the Emperor had embarked was apparently tending to this disastrous result. A united Italy, moreover, could not be formed without despoiling the Pope of his richest provinces. On the very day on which the battle of Solferino was fought, the Emperor had endeavoured to reassure religious France by a paragraph in the 'Moniteur' denying the rumour that Piedmont was about to unite all Italy in one State. It was said afterwards that the mere fact that it was necessary to make such a contradiction betrayed the anxiety which the Emperor felt at the increasing irritation of his Catholic subjects.[2] But if the Emperor was finding it difficult to control the movement which he had done so much to initiate, or to restrain the action of the great statesman who was organising revolution in Central Italy, he had other and more pressing reasons for desiring peace. There was no longer any doubt that Prussia was contemplating the active intervention which the Prince Consort had advised her to postpone till Napoleon was involved in a death struggle with Austria. She was massing 250,000 men on the Rhine; she was asking the German Diet to place federal troops under the orders

His fear of Prussian intervention.

[1] I have not thought it necessary to relate in detail the movements in Central Italy in 1859. The lesser Italian States were swept by the revolution which equally overwhelmed bad government like that of Modena, or well-intentioned sovereigns like the Duchess of Parma. De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 59 *seq.*; cf. Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Italy, *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 443.

[2] The note was inserted in the *Moniteur* of the 24th of June, the day on which the battle of Solferino was fought. De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 103.

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of the Regent of Prussia; and it was calculated that, with this addition to his own forces, the Regent would have some 400,000 men at his disposal.[1] The policy of Prussia would compel Napoleon to employ on the Rhine a force at least as large as that which he had concentrated in Italy. But the Emperor knew that he had no force at his disposal which he could send to resist a Prussian invasion. Marshal Randon, his Minister for War, was complaining that he could not spare troops from France to replace the casualties of the battle-field, and the much more serious losses from disease.[2] He was calculating that he had only 120,000 men to oppose to Prussia on the Rhine; and he was urging that the National Guard should be embodied to meet the crisis.[3] The Empress, on her part, was supporting Marshal Randon's representations. On the eve of the battle of Solferino, the Emperor received a letter from his wife telling him that the Prussian army was concentrating at Coblentz and Cologne, that the troops remaining in France were insufficient to meet invasion, and urging him to conclude peace at once, and send back a portion of the army of Italy. The Emperor, who had been lunching with Victor Emmanuel, and who, after lunch, had accompanied him on horseback to survey the field on which the battle was to be fought on the morrow, read the letter to his host. The King listened in silence, and the two men returned to camp without exchanging another word.[4] Nor was it only from France that the disturbing messages were arriving. Russia was the one great power which sympathised with Napoleon's policy, and wished him success; but Russia, still weakened by the losses which the Crimea

[1] Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 214.

[2] There were 25,000 sick soldiers in hospital at the beginning of July. De la Gorce, vol. iii. p. 104.

[3] Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 223.

[4] *Recollections of a Veteran*, p. 156.

had inflicted on her, felt herself disabled from taking any active part in the war, and urged the Emperor to consider the possibility of declaring peace. The Czar, indeed, took the unusual course of sending one of his own aides-de-camp through Paris to Italy with an autograph letter urging his brother Emperor, if he would avoid the terrible extremity of a war with Germany, to lose no time in opening negotiations with Austria.[1]

The Emperor suggests that England should mediate between the combatants.

Touched, then, by the miseries of the battle-field, conscious of his inability to repair the deficiencies of his own army without weakening the defences of France, and alarmed at the prospect of a new conflagration on the Rhine, which his advisers and the Empress were assuring him they would be powerless to extinguish, the Emperor determined to make a serious effort to stop the war; and he instructed M. de Persigny, who had just returned to the French Embassy at London,[2] to suggest to the British Ministry that it might usefully mediate between himself and his brother Emperor of Austria. The moment was, in one sense, opportune. On the 11th of June, Lord Derby's Government had been defeated on a vote of want of confidence, and, on the 18th of June, Lord Palmerston, with Lord John Russell as his Foreign Minister, had resumed office.[3] There could be little doubt that the change of Government would make a radical difference in the foreign policy of Great Britain. The new Ministry, indeed, like the old Cabinet, professed a desire for neutrality; but the neutrality of Lord Malmesbury had been inspired by the desire to prevent France from pushing home her attack; the neutrality of Lord John Russell was directed to restraining Prussia from taking part in

[1] Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 216.

[2] M. de Persigny had been succeeded in 1858 by the Duc de Malakoff, *supra*, p. 126. On the outbreak of the Italian War, the Duc had been appointed to the command of the French army on the Rhine, and M. de Persigny had returned to London. *Vide, inter alia*, *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 485.

[3] See *supra*, p. 196.

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the fray.[1] Lord Malmesbury, moreover, had taken his stand on the treaties of 1815; and the statesman who took his stand on these treaties was necessarily opposed to the aspirations of Italy. Lord Palmerston, on the contrary, when the Italian Minister suggested to him the idea of a kingdom of Northern Italy embracing not only Venetia and Lombardy, but the Romagna and the Duchies, replied with a smile, 'The only question is, whether France will desire a second Prussia on her flank.'[2] He allowed Lord John Russell to record officially the advantages which would accrue to Europe from a united Italy.[3] His sympathies were so pronounced that the Prince Consort declared that he was out-and-out Napoléonide, and went on to say of him that 'he maintains France to be in the right on all points; calls the Emperor honourable; the object a useful one of driving out the Austrians, and does not recognise any right on the part of Prussia to interfere in the affair.'[4] Verily the same word neutrality may be used to cover policies as opposite as the poles.

[1] The Queen had made the strange suggestion in May to the Empress of the French that the war should not be carried beyond the territory of Sardinia! She must apparently have persuaded herself that Napoleon had nothing to do but to drive back Giulai from the Dora Baltea, and that the liberation of Northern Italy from the Austrian yoke was outside the range of practical politics. Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 448. Lord Malmesbury was a little more liberal in his views. He was willing that the war should be carried on in Lombardy. *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 485. But he instructed Lord Cowley to urge the Emperor to neutralise the Baltic and the Adriatic; in other words, to deprive himself of the means of striking at Venice from the sea, and of paralysing Prussia by an attack on her northern ports. *Ibid.*, p. 482. On the other hand, Lord John Russell, four days after accepting office, addressed a strong despatch to Prussia urging her to remain neutral. *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 559. It is true that Lord Malmesbury, before the war began, had given similar advice; but his whole argument was that Germany should not enter 'at once' into war, and that she had no grounds 'at the present moment' for declaring it. *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 504. Lord Malmesbury's advice was exactly consistent with the Prince Consort's opinion, *supra*, p. 242 *n.*

[2] De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 107.

[3] *Parl. Papers*, 1859, vol. xxxii. p. 559.

[4] Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 434.

It was, however, to Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell—and not to Lord Derby and Lord Malmesbury—that M. de Persigny made his unexpected suggestion that the British Ministry might usefully mediate between the combatants. He hinted that (i) Lombardy, Piacenza, and Carrara should be annexed to Piedmont; (ii) Modena and Venetia should be formed into separate states under an Archduke; (iii) the Legations should be separated from the States of the Church, and placed under a lay ruler; (iv) Tuscany should be restored to its former ruler or placed under the Duchess of Parma; (v) the whole of the Italian States should be grouped in a confederation; and (vi) a congress should be held to carry out these arrangements.[1]

There can hardly be a doubt that Lord Derby and Lord Malmesbury would have rejected these terms as too unfavourable to Austria. Lord Palmerston at once declared them too unfavourable to Italy.[2] The utmost that Lord John Russell and he could be persuaded to do was to send the proposal to Vienna, without supporting it with any recommendation for its acceptance.

The Emperor proposes an armistice.

Informed by telegram of the disposition of the British Government, and concluding, not unnaturally, that a proposal, so platonically supported, was not likely to be accepted by Austria, the Emperor on the 6th of July decided on addressing himself directly to his

[1] The proposal will be found in Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 224; in less detail in De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 107; cf. *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. pp. cci–ccv.

[2] Lord Palmerston wrote to Lord John Russell (6th of July, 1859): 'The more I think of Persigny's proposal, the less I like it. . . . The scheme throws wholly out of question the wishes of the Italians themselves, and we are asked to propose to the belligerents a parcelling out of the nations of Italy, as if we had any authority to dispose of them. I cannot be a party to it.' *Life of Palmerston* vol. v. pp. 158, 160. According to M. Ollivier, he said to M. Persigny, 'Ce que l'Empereur propose, ce n'est pas l'Italie rendue à elle-même, mais l'Italie vendue à l'Autriche.' *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 225.

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enemy. The step was unusual, but its novelty probably invested it with a charm in the eyes of a ruler who liked, both in peace and war, to act differently from other men.[1] At any rate, on the afternoon of the 6th of July, he despatched General Fleury to the Austrian head quarters at Verona, with an autograph letter to his brother Emperor proposing an armistice. The Emperor of Austria was already in bed when General Fleury arrived. He rose to receive his visitor, and naturally asked for time before he answered so unexpected and important a communication. General Fleury readily consented to return for the reply to it at eight o'clock on the following morning; but, in strict accordance with his orders, he contrived to add a strong reason for an early decision. 'The Emperor of Austria,' so he said, 'was perhaps not aware that the French fleet had already occupied the island of Lossini in the Adriatic, that it was only waiting for orders to commence its attack on Venice, and that it was accompanied by a military force to aid it in the attack.'[2] The knowledge of the new movement was calculated to produce on the nerves of the Emperor of Austria much the same impression which the private soldier occasionally feels when he finds that the flank of the line in which he is fighting has been turned by the enemy.

If the Emperor of Austria had been a stronger man he might probably have concluded, in the few hours which were open to him for deliberation, that the considerations which were inclining his adversary to peace should have induced him to continue the struggle. If he confined his vision to Italy, he must have seen that, though he had suffered defeat, his army

[1] 'Il aimait à ne rien faire comme tout le monde, ni la guerre, ni la paix.' De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iv. p. 108.

[2] See Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 226.

was more numerous than that of its opponent, and that its retreat had brought it to the strongest position in Europe. If he carried his view beyond his own dominions, he could not avoid perceiving that Germany was on the point of marching to the Rhine,[1] or realising that the entrance of a new combatant into the lists would alter the conditions of the struggle. But the unfortunate Monarch derived little satisfaction from the prospect of the diversion which Germany was preparing for him; for, if Germany was marching to the Rhine, Prussia was marching at her head, and asking the Diet to entrust her with the command of the German armies. The Emperor feared that German intervention would inevitably lead to Prussian preponderance in Germany, and the loss of a province in the South of Europe seemed almost more tolerable than the prospect of Prussian preponderance in the North. The Emperor of Austria, in short, was almost as much afraid of the consequences of German intervention as Napoleon himself.[2]

But the Emperor of Austria was not merely racked with jealousy of Prussian preponderance; he had also reasons for anxiety which the strong position of his army in the Quadrilateral could not avert. Hungary was on the point of rebellion; Count Cavour was anxiously striving to promote a new Hungarian insurrection; and the Emperor Napoleon was discussing with M. Kossuth the conditions on which Hungary might rely on the assistance of France.[3] The Emperor of Austria was old enough to recollect the events of 1848; and how Hungary had only been tamed into

[1] 'Son armée, plus nombreuse, s'appuyait à des forteresses redoutables, et l'Allemagne marchait sur le Rhin.' Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 230.

[2] See *ibid.*, pp. 230, 231.

[3] The negotiations with M. Kossuth in May, June, and July 1859 will be found in *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. pp. cii, clxxxiv, and clxxxvi; cf. *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. pp. 106, 107, 251 *seq.* Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Italy, *Parl. Papers*, 1860, vol. lxvii. p. 7.

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obedience by the arms of Russia. It was certain in 1859 that St. Petersburg would not despatch a single Cossack to the aid of Vienna. It was one thing to contemplate a renewal of the struggle in Upper Italy; it was another thing to face it with a rebellion in Hungary, and a French fleet at Venice. Affected by these apprehensions, jealous of Prussia's pretensions, and unnerved by the miseries of the battle-field, the Emperor of Austria decided to give way, and, on the morning of the 7th of July, he accepted the armistice.

The armistice accepted.

Four days later the two Emperors met at Villafranca, a place which was thenceforward to become famous, and discussed the terms on which peace should be made. Their preparation did not involve much difficulty. The victor and the vanquished were equally desirous of peace; and differences which had been insuperable in March were easily reconciled in July. The terms which were ultimately agreed upon were as follows: 1. The creation of an Italian confederation under the honorary presidency of the Pope. 2. The cession to France, and the transfer by France to Italy, of the province of Lombardy. 3. The inclusion of Venetia in the Italian Confederation, as a province, however, under the Crown of Austria. 4. The restoration of the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the Duke of Modena to their respective States. 5. In addition, the two Emperors agreed to invite the Pope to introduce indispensable reforms into the States of the Church.[1]

The treaty of Villafranca.

[1] The point which created most difficulty was the restoration of the Dukes of Tuscany and Modena. Napoleon wished the article to run, 'Les deux souverains feront tous leurs efforts, *excepté le recours aux armes*, pour que les ducs de Toscane et de Modène rentrent dans leurs états en donnant une amnistie générale *et une constitution*.' The Emperor of Austria objected to the words which I have printed in italics, and they were ultimately withdrawn; Austria, on the one side, promising not to oppose the introduction of constitutional government, and France, on the other side, asserting that she would not use her own troops, or allow Austrian troops to be employed to effect these restorations. The terms agreed upon at Villafranca were embodied

In conceding these terms, the Emperor of the French displayed true statesmanship. He had shown both vigour in war and moderation in victory. His sword had freed the richest of Italian provinces from the yoke of Austria; his moderation had saved Europe from a war, which would have involved almost an entire continent in a common conflagration. In the eleven years which had already passed since his rise to the first place in France, in the eleven years which were yet to run their course before his star was to sink as suddenly as it rose, he never stood so high as on the day of Villafranca. Rightly or wrongly, he had convinced the world that he had that excellent thing, a giant's strength, and he could fairly claim that he had given proof that he was not 'tyrannous to use it like a giant.'

It is true that he had failed to carry out his original programme of freeing Italy from the Alps to the Adriatic; but, in giving Lombardy to Piedmont, he had done much to win the gratitude of Italians. He had, moreover, the generosity to acknowledge that his failure to realise his whole programme had cancelled any claim which the proceedings at Plombières had given him for the annexation of Savoy, or of Savoy and Nice, to France; and he told Victor Emmanuel that if the Piedmontese Government would pay him the expense of the war, he would not think [1] further of these provinces. An Italian who had staked his all on the issue might not unnaturally have regretted that Napoleon should have withdrawn his hand from the plough after driving it only halfway across the field; but an Italian who fairly reviewed the whole circumstances could hardly avoid the conclusion that his disappointment at what

in November in three treaties signed at Zurich. *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. pp. 234, 241, 243, 335.

[1] 'Il vostro governo mi pagherà le spese di guerra, e non penseremo più a Nizza e alla Savoia.' *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. ccxxvi.

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remained undone was lost in his gratitude for the work which had been accomplished.

The King of Piedmont and Count Cavour.

'And such were the feelings of the gallant Sovereign who had sacrificed so much, and staked so much, on the French alliance. The King of Piedmont had not been consulted on the terms of the armistice; he was not consulted on the terms of Villafranca. In the first moment of his indignation, he even talked of continuing the war alone; but he had the wisdom to stifle his feelings, and to terminate the interview by courteously declaring that, whatever might be the Emperor's decision, he should always remember with gratitude his Majesty's exertions for Italy, and repay them with fidelity.[1] The King, like the Emperor, had shown that he could subordinate his aspirations to the necessities of the situation, and that he could satisfy himself with the half loaf if the whole were unattainable. It was not so, however, with Count Cavour. Intent on the great object to which all his efforts had been directed, he could not reconcile himself to stopping short in the hour of victory. The word compromise, so dear to other statesmen, had no place in his vocabulary. He hurried from Turin to the camp; he called upon the King to denounce the peace. His language was so intemperate[2] that the King, after vainly endeavouring to calm him, turned his back on him and left the room; and the Count, in a rage, flung up his office.

[1] *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. pp. ccxii, ccxv. In signing the treaty, however, the King added the words, 'Pour ce qui me concerne.' Napoleon, in consenting to the addition of these words, perhaps hardly appreciated their importance; but their true significance was soon visible. The King had only signed for Piedmont alone; he had reserved the right to the people of Central Italy to work out their own independence and decide for themselves their future. De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 115.

[2] The King—the story goes—said to the Count, 'Calm yourself, calm yourself; remember that I am the King;' and the Count, mad with anger, replied, 'I am the man whom all Italians recognise. I am the real king!' 'What do you say?' retorted the King, 'that you are king? You are a birichin' (a puppet). *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. ccxix, note.

The irritation of Count Cavour was almost justified by the action of the British Ministry. On the news of the treaty of Villafranca reaching this country, Lord Palmerston wrote privately to the French Ambassador, M. de Persigny, protesting in the strongest manner against its terms.[1] Though the Queen herself demurred to Lord Palmerston's opinion,[2] Lord John Russell, a week later, officially repeated to Lord Cowley the view which Lord Palmerston had already privately communicated to M. de Persigny. According to Lord John Russell, if Venetia formed part of the new Italian confederation, the Emperor of Austria would necessarily exercise a preponderating influence in the affairs of Italy; and it was much better, in the interest of Italy, to leave Venice a little more Austrian, than to give Austria a pretext for interfering in the affairs of the peninsula. But Lord John Russell also went on to point out that the new kingdom of Piedmont would be very insufficiently protected on its eastern frontier, that it would be a great advantage to the Pope's subjects to place the Roman States not immediately in the vicinity of Rome under lay government; and, with respect to Central Italy, he put on record all the declarations which the Emperor of the French had made, that the Emperor of Austria ought not to use Austrian troops to impose by force the restoration of the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the Duke of Modena; and he added, 'It being well understood that Austrian troops are not to cross the Po or the Mincio to interfere in the internal government of the States of the Pope, or of Tuscany,

The view of the British Ministry upon the peace.

[1] Ashley's *Palmerston*, vol. ii. p. 368; and cf. Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 462.

[2] See *ibid.*, p. 463. I have not thought it necessary to refer further to her Majesty's objections to her Ministers' policy. See on this point *Life of Lord John Russell*, vol. ii. pp. 321, 322. It is sufficient to say that, while her Majesty was within her rights in pointing out the objections which occurred to her, she deferred to the view of her constitutional advisers, and allowed them to carry out their own policy.

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Modena, or Parma, still less in Lombardy, Piedmont, or the kingdom of the Two Sicilies; and that the Emperor of the French intends to withdraw his forces from all parts of Italy as soon as the new organisation is completed; there remains little more to be said as to the mode of carrying the treaty into execution. The free voice of Tuscany can probably be ascertained by summoning an assembly of the representatives of the people.' [1]

This despatch might have been written by Count Cavour himself. It asserted, as no other great statesman had asserted, the policy of Italy for the Italians, which, for the next two years, was to form the chief text of the British Foreign Office; but it recognised, what Count Cavour in his fury had failed to recognise, that the policy of Italy for the Italians could be evolved from the arrangements of Villafranca, and that, if force were not permitted, Central Italy would gravitate naturally and irresistibly to Piedmont.

The condition of Central Italy.

On the outbreak of war, indeed, the rulers of Central Italy had themselves proclaimed their own downfall by their conduct. The Archduke of Tuscany and the Duke of Modena had withdrawn to the Austrian camp.[2] The Cardinal Legate had left Bologna. Deputations from the Duchies had been despatched to Victor Emmanuel with offers of allegiance; and though, in deference to Napoleon's objection, Victor Emmanuel had not accepted the offer, commissioners had been sent from Turin to Parma, Bologna, Modena, and Florence, to carry on the government.[3] After Villafranca, it soon became plain that none of these places had any disposition

[1] *State Papers*, vol. xlix. pp. 110–113.

[2] The Duchess of Parma, strengthened perhaps by her friendship for Napoleon, but relying still more on the affection of her subjects, who recognised her amiable qualities as a ruler, alone remained in her capital. See De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 62.

[3] *Vide, inter alia*, Countess Cesaresco's *Cavour*, p. 154, and Probyn's *Italy*, pp. 252, 254.

to take back their old rulers.[1] On the 16th of August the Tuscan Assembly formally declared that it could neither recall nor receive the dynasty of Lorraine. It followed up the resolution, on the 20th of August, by unanimously voting the annexation of the duchy to Piedmont.[2] Modena, Parma, and the Romagna hastened to follow the example of Tuscany.[3]

The anxiety of the Emperor Napoleon.

The Emperor of the French watched this movement with some anxiety. The interests of France and the opinions of her statesmen were opposed to the formation of a powerful kingdom on her south-eastern frontier. The annexation of Tuscany to Piedmont, from Napoleon's standpoint, was outside the range of practical politics. It was 'impossible,' to use his own word.[4] And the Emperor undoubtedly thought that his exertions and his sacrifices for the cause of Italy would make his will law. He could not bring himself to believe that, after practically dictating terms of peace to Austria, and imposing them on Piedmont, his views and his wishes would be almost contemptuously disregarded by the duchies or provinces of Central Italy.

The Emperor, in fact, was so confident of his power to force his own decision on Italy, that he threw away the weapon which would have made him irresistible. At Villafranca he had actually desired to make it a condition of the treaty that force should not be used to bring back duke and archduke to their duchies; and though, in deference to the scruples of the Emperor of Austria, the words had been withdrawn, Napoleon had made the positive statement that he would neither employ his own troops nor allow Austrian troops to

[1] See Sir J. Hudson's despatch in Correspondence relating to Italy, *Parl. Papers*, 1860, vol. lxvii. p. 43.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 59, 75.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 84, 85, 93, 102. Some people, I believe, still think that Central Italy was well governed. These persons would do well to read Mr. Gladstone's account of the Duke of Modena. *Hansard*, vol. clxi. p. 1575.

[4] Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 256.

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be used for the purpose.[1] On his way home he had repeated the same assurance to Italian statesmen: so long as order was preserved, he promised that there should be no intervention, either on the part of France or on the part of Austria;[2] while later in the autumn he had given the same assurance to the British Government. 'The employment of force,' so he authorised Count Walewski to say, had 'never entered into the intentions' of the Emperor.[3]

Central Italy gravitates to Piedmont.

Every day that passed, however, showed that nothing would induce Central Italy to forego the prospect which union with Piedmont afforded it. The provisional governments, which, after the peace, succeeded the commissioners who had been sent from Turin during the war to administer the affairs of Tuscany, Modena, Parma, and the Legations, affirmed their desire for union with Piedmont and Lombardy, and sent deputations to Paris and London to plead their cause.[4] Their attitude, if they had stood alone, might possibly have been overcome; but they received powerful support from the British Ministry. Lord John Russell, on every possible occasion, kept on repeating, 'Let the Italians settle their affairs themselves;' and Lord Palmerston supported the Foreign Minister by declaring that 'the people of the duchies have as good a right to change their rulers as the people of England, France, Belgium, and Sweden;' and that 'the annexation of the duchies to Piedmont would be an unmixed good for Italy and for France and for Europe.'[5] The language which Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary were

[1] See *supra*, p. 260, note.

[2] Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 256.

[3] *Parl. Papers*, 1860, relating to Italy, vol. lxvii. pp. 148–151.

[4] Probyn, *Italy, 1815 to 1878*, p. 260. I am writing the history of England, and not the history of Italy, or I should like to have said more of what Italy owed to Baron Ricasoli in Florence and M. Farini in Modena. The reader who wishes a brief and intelligble account of the doings of these men may usefully refer to Stillman, *The Union of Italy*, p. 299 *seq.*

[5] *Life of Lord Palmerston*, vol. v. p. 165. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 162.

using in London was vigorously supported by the British Minister at the Court of Turin, Sir James Hudson, one of the few men who have raised themselves to the very highest rank in politics by their conduct as diplomatists; and, as the autumn of 1859 wore on, it became abundantly clear that the true question was not the attitude of Central Italy, but the willingness or unwillingness of the Piedmontese Government to accept the allegiance which Central Italy was offering it.

Italian confederation.

The question of union was, moreover, inextricably mixed up with the question of confederation. Napoleon had himself suggested confederation to Austria. He had recognised that the confederation of Italy would not excite the apprehensions among his own people which the union of Italy was calculated to arouse; and that the position, which it was proposed that the Pope should receive as the president of the confederation, would do something to reconcile Catholic France to a policy which was, in other respects, hostile to the Papacy. But, if confederation had been proposed by France, it had been readily accepted by Austria, for Austria understood that, while Venice was represented in the confederation, she would continue to exercise a preponderating influence in Italian affairs. The same reasons, however, which were inducing the Court of Austria to support confederation, were inducing the British Ministry to denounce it; and Austria, to her dismay, was discovering that, if she had no longer to reckon with France, whose Emperor was desirous of carrying out the arrangements to which he had agreed at Villafranca, she had to deal with the opposition of the British Ministry, which was making itself the exponent of the aspirations of the Italians.

The Emperor Napoleon proposes a congress.

Conscious of the difficulties in which he was being gradually involved, incapable of stemming the drift of opinion, which was carrying him far away from the

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settlement which he had devised, Napoleon fell back on the remedy, which always occurred to him in moments of embarrassment, and suggested that the Italian question should be referred to a congress. The original suggestion to this effect was made immediately after the peace of Villafranca,[1] but it was renewed in the autumn. The British Government had some hesitation in accepting the invitation. It declined to consider it till it was acquainted with the nature of the arrangements to be proposed at it; as the price of its consent it succeeded in obtaining fresh concessions: (i) that, if it should prove impossible to found an Italian federation in which Austria had a voice without giving her preponderance, France would not refuse to examine the possibility of constituting it without Austria; (ii) that the employment of force had never entered into the Emperor's intentions, and (iii) that France was as anxious as this country to free Italy from the presence of foreign troops. 'In full reliance that these declarations will be maintained and acted upon,' Lord John Russell, on the 31st of October, expressed himself ready to give a fair and candid consideration to an invitation to enter into a congress or conference.[2] The example of this country was ultimately followed by other powers, and by the middle of December the whole of the states invited to attend the congress had signified their intention to accept the invitation to it.[3]

At this moment, when, after months of weary correspondence, the solution of the question had apparently been advanced by the tardy concurrence of

[1] There is an important debate on this point in *Hansard*, vol. clv. pp. 543, 546.

[2] *Parl. Papers relating to Italy*, 1860, vol. lxvii., pp. 148–151. In the Speech from the Throne in 1860, the Queen said, 'I accepted the invitation, but, at the same time, I made known that I should steadfastly maintain the principle that in such a congress no external force should be employed to impose upon the people of Italy any particular government or constitution.' *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 3.

[3] *Parl. Papers*, 1860, vol. lxvii. p. 253.

The publication of 'Le Pape et le Congrès.'

all the great powers of Europe in the projected congress, the whole thing was thrown into inextricable confusion by the characteristic but inopportune action of the French Emperor. It was, perhaps, one of the misfortunes of his position that, while he was anxious to enlist opinion in France on his side, he was without the machinery which representative institutions and responsible ministers supply for testing and guiding the views of a people. In default, he was forced to expound his policy by official communications to newspapers and the publication of inspired pamphlets. Before the war he had instructed M. de la Guéronnière to prepare opinion in the brochure, 'Napoléon III et l'Italie.' On the eve of the congress he directed the same writer to set out his views in another publication, 'Le Pape et le Congrès.' In this famous pamphlet, the more telling because its anonymous author wrote as a true friend of the Church, M. de la Guéronnière[1] endeavoured to show that the best thing for the Pope, for Italy, and for the world, was for the Pope to remain in Rome, and abandon the ecclesiastical territory outside the city. To Napoleon was reserved the great task of reconciling the Pope with his people and with his age; to the congress the more formal duty of endorsing the arrangements which the reconciliation made necessary.[2]

The pamphlet fell like a bomb-shell on Europe. Anonymous though it was, it was universally recognised

[1] The share which M. de la Guéronnière had in the preparation of the pamphlet will be found in *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. 385; see, as to the two pamphlets, Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 388, note, and vol. v. p. 3, and De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 174. A translation of M. de la Guéronnière's previous pamphlet, *Napoléon III et l'Italie*, will be found in the *Times* of the 5th of February, 1859.

[2] The advice which was given in the pamphlet was repeated in some official correspondence between the Emperor and the Pope, which was printed in the *Moniteur* of the 11th of January, 1860, and is reprinted in the *Times* of the 12th of January.

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that it was inspired by the Emperor; indeed, he made no secret that its views were his views.[1] His cousin even went farther, and told the Sardinian Minister that the Emperor had inspired the pamphlet to bring himself into line with England and to get rid of the congress.[2] Prince Napoleon's declaration will not be taken too literally by those who have studied most carefully the Emperor's character. He was undoubtedly again passing through one of those phases of irresolution, during which he drifted helplessly on the sea of fortune; but he had no desire to rid himself of a congress which he hoped might extricate him from some of his more pressing difficulties. If, however, the pamphlet was not written with the intention which Prince Napoleon attributed to it, the publication was attended with this effect. Austria, at once, declined to enter the congress unless the French Government undertook neither to advocate nor to support the measures which were recommended in the pamphlet.[3] Count Walewski, unable to procure from his Sovereign a disavowal of the views which the pamphlet unfolded, resigned his office, and was succeeded by M. Thouvenel.[4] A still greater change was almost immediately afterwards effected; for the Ministry, which had replaced Count Cavour in July, resigned, and Count Cavour resumed power. A great French Minister,[5] living in retirement, is said to have exclaimed, 'At this moment, two men share the attention of Europe, the Emperor Napoleon and M. de Cavour. The game is laid: I back M. de Cavour.' A leading Italian newspaper put the effects

The resignation of M. Walewski in France, and the return of M. Cavour to power in Piedmont.

[1] Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. v. p. 3, note.

[2] *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. cccxix.

[3] *Parl. Papers relating to Italy*, 1860, vol. lxviii. p. 274.

[4] Count Walewski was presented with two estates and a pension of 5,000*l.* a year on his retirement. *Times'* leading article of the 7th of January, 1860. M. Thouvenel had previously filled the French Embassy at Constantinople.

[5] M. Guizot. See Mazade, *La Vie de Cavour*, p. 313.

of the change even more clearly. 'The first Ministry of Count Cavour,' so wrote the 'Opinione,' 'meant independence; the second means annexation.' [1]

And, in fact, in the new game which the year just beginning was about to witness, Count Cavour had the same advantage which he had enjoyed in 1858 and 1859. He knew, and the Emperor did not know, his own mind. He was determined that Italy should decide her own destiny, and he was encouraged in his determination by the progress of events and the attitude of England. He had long learned, moreover, to realise that the arrangements of Villafranca had not been attended with the disastrous results which he had anticipated. The political campaign, which had followed the treaty, had been of more profit to Italy than the military campaign which had preceded it, and, in the solitude of his retreat at Leri, he had found himself, over and over again, saying, 'Blessed be the peace of Villafranca.' [2]

The circumstances, however, which were inspiring Count Cavour with new confidence, filled neutral statesmen with anxiety. Austria had declared, before the congress had been determined on, that, if a single Sardinian soldier were moved into Central Italy, she would send an army to oppose. On the other hand, the Emperor of the French had assured the Austrian Ambassador at Paris that, if a single Austrian soldier crossed the Po, France would put her army in motion. It was obviously, therefore, within the power of Count Cavour, by a single act of calculated rashness, to bring on, at any moment, a renewal of the war. In these circumstances Lord John Russell came forward with a fresh proposal. He suggested that (i) France and Austria should agree not to interfere by force in the

Lord John Russell's proposal of January 1860.

[1] De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 189.

[2] Mazade, *La Vie de Cavour*, p. 318.

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internal affairs of Italy except at the unanimous invitation of the five great European powers; (ii) the Emperor of the French should concert with the Pope for the ultimate evacuation of Rome by the troops of France, and that the French army should be withdrawn from Northern Italy at a convenient period; (iii) the internal government of Venetia should not be in any way a matter of negotiation between the European powers; (iv) Great Britain and France should invite the King of Sardinia not to send troops into Central Italy until its several states and provinces, by a new vote of the assemblies, after a new election, should have solemnly declared their wishes as to their future destiny. Should that decision be in favour of annexation to Sardinia, Great Britain and France should no longer require that Sardinian troops should not enter those states and provinces.[1]

The first three of these suggestions were sent by Lord John on the 14th of January, 1860, both to Paris and Vienna, for acceptance. The fourth was only made to France, but it was communicated to Austria. It was received with different feelings in the two capitals. France, convinced of the impossibility of carrying out the arrangements which had been made at Villafranca and confirmed at Zurich, was disposed to regard the proposition as a satisfactory solution of a difficult problem, but felt herself bound in honour to consult Austria before formally agreeing to it.[2] Austria, on the contrary, while declaring that she had no intention to intervene, declined to bind herself by any pledges as to her future action. With respect to the

[1] *Parl. Papers relating to Italy*, 1860, pt. ii. vol. lxvii. p. 4. Lord John Russell was afterwards charged with partiality in making the fourth of these suggestions; but he replied that it was in conformity with the principles which he had contended for from June 1859 to January 1860, that Italy should be free to regulate her own affairs. *Hansard*, vol. clvi. pp. 1967, 1968.

[2] *Parl. Papers relating to Italy*, Session 1860, pt. ii. vol. lxvii. p. 13; *State Papers*, 1859–60, p. 534.

fourth of Lord John's proposals, she not unnaturally demurred to a proposal which was much less favourable to herself than the arrangements which had been made at Villafranca, and to which Napoleon had never ceased to assure her that he would scrupulously adhere.[1] Disappointed, however, as she was at the preference which Napoleon was displaying for the British proposal, she did not hesitate to add that she trusted that no difference of opinion would lead to a renewal of the war.[2] The end was now obviously very near. When France was discussing the solution which England was proposing, and Austria was intimating that, however much she disliked it, she would not oppose it by force, it only required a little moral firmness to give effect to it. In the middle of February, indeed, Napoleon made one last effort to compromise the dispute, proposing that Parma and Modena should be annexed to Sardinia, that the States of the Church should be vested in the King of Piedmont as the vicar of the Pope, and that Tuscany should be formed into a separate principality and placed under a prince of the House of Savoy.[3] But this proposal, which might conceivably have proved acceptable six months before, fell almost stillborn in February 1860. Lord John Russell at once declared that he could not adopt it,[4] and Count Cavour, strengthened by the moral support of England, insisted that it had come too late, that the question must be decided by the people themselves, and that, if they determined to throw in their lot with Piedmont, the King could no longer refuse their request. On the 11th of March the people of Central Italy again decided in favour of annexation; on the 18th the annexation was made; on the 25th orders were given for the

The annexation of Central Italy to Piedmont.

[1] *Parl. Papers relating to Italy* 1860, pt. ii. vol. lxvii. pp. 58–64 *State Papers*, 1859–60, p. 549.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 575.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 580.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 582.

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election of the first Italian Parliament, representing not only Piedmont but also Central Italy; and on the 2nd of April the Parliament met at Turin.

The question of Savoy and Nice.

This great result—the most important achievement of fifty years—had been due not merely to the constancy of the Italians and the courage of Count Cavour, but to the firmness of the British Government, or of the three men—Lord Palmerston, Lord John Russell, and Mr. Gladstone—who throughout the preceding months had prevailed over the reluctance of the Court and the hesitation of their colleagues. But the consolidation of Central Italy with Piedmont involved one great sacrifice. After Villafranca, Napoleon had recognised that his failure to realise his whole programme had cancelled the bargain of Plombières, and had told Victor Emmanuel that, if he were repaid the cost of the war, he would think no longer of Savoy. He had, however, hardly renounced his neighbour's vineyard, before he began casting his eyes upon it; and, in October, he suggested to a representative of Piedmont in Paris that he might waive his claim for the payment of his expenses in return for the cession of Savoy.[1] When the Emperor was using such language at Paris, it was not altogether unnatural that rumours of his intention should be revived in many parts of Europe.[2] At last, early in January 1860, a French newspaper, 'La Patrie,' announced that the Savoyards themselves were longing to become French. One discovery leads to another; and the same paper a few days afterwards informed its readers that the same attractions which had driven Milan into the arms of Piedmont were pushing not only Savoy, but also Nice, into the arms of France. M. Thouvenel, indeed, at the end of January assured Lord Cowley that the

[1] *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. ccxlvii.

[2] *State Papers*, 1859–60, pp. 458–470.

Emperor had not alluded to the subject in his conversations with him.[1] If Napoleon had observed his usual silence with his own Foreign Minister, he had already broached the subject at Turin,[2] and, before the middle of February, he asserted that he believed that the wish of the Savoyards was to be united to France; and that, subject to that wish and to the consent of the great powers of Europe, he did not see why the annexation should not be made.[3] On the 1st of March he went a step farther, and admitted that he proposed to annex Savoy and the county of Nice.[4]

Their annexation to France.

By this time, too, the Emperor's language was changing. Hitherto he had contented himself with saying that the Savoyards desired annexation to France, and that he did not see why France should refuse to give effect to their wishes; but, on the 1st of March, in opening his Parliament he declared that, in face of a Piedmont enlarged into a kingdom of nine million inhabitants, it was his duty to secure the frontiers of his Empire by 'reclaiming' the French slopes of the Alps.[5] It was true that M. Thouvenel assured the British Ambassador at Paris that his Majesty intended to respect the wishes of the Savoyards;[6] but it was tolerably plain that he would hardly have made use of the phrase if he had not satisfied himself that the Savoyards might be trusted to carry out his programme. In fact, the only real obstacle had already been

[1] *State Papers*, 1859–60, p. 472.

[2] *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. cccxxix. How eagerly the Emperor desired the annexation may be seen from the correspondence between M. Thouvenel and the Duc de Gramont. *Le Secret de l'Empereur*, vol. i. p. 41.

[3] *State Papers*, 1859–60, p. 491.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 591. It is worth observing that, at the beginning of the correspondence, Savoy only was mentioned. Early in January, however, the annexation of Nice, as well as of Savoy, was mentioned at Turin (*Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. ccxlix); and, on the 28th of January, Lord John Russell in a letter to Lord Cowley alluded to the annexation of Nice. *State Papers*, 1859–60, p. 474. He seems, therefore, even at that date to have been aware of the Emperor's intention.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 631.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 591.

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removed. Count Cavour regarded the new arrangement as the inevitable price which Piedmont had to pay for the annexation of Central Italy. 'Maintenant vous voilà nos complices,'[1] so he said to the French Minister when he signed the treaty[2] presented to him. 'The cession of Savoy and Nice,' so he explained afterwards in the Piedmontese Chambers, 'is an integral part of our policy in the past; the indispensable expedient of our policy in the future.'

When France was reclaiming the French slopes of the Alps, and Piedmont was assenting to the sacrifice, a neutral power had little chance of successfully opposing the arrangement. The French Government, indeed, had promised that it would do nothing without the concurrence of the inhabitants, and without the consent of the great powers; but, in 1860, no one seemed to doubt that the inhabitants as a body would support an arrangement demanded by France and conceded by Piedmont, and the great powers manifested no desire to support the protest of the British Ministry. Lord John Russell, indeed, had the satisfaction of hearing that the Court of Berlin shared his opinion.[3] Russia, on the contrary, true to the principle of the Holy Alliance, declared that it was free to the King of Sardinia to give away his own provinces, and that it was free to the Emperor of the French to accept them; while Austria considered that the annexation of Savoy to France was not worse than the annexation of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany to Sardinia, and that she herself had much less interest in it.[4] It was obvious, therefore, that this country stood almost alone in opposing the annexation. Resolutely as Lord John

[1] Mazade, *Vie de Cavour*, p. 328; but cf. Benedetti, *The Mission in Prussia*, p. 5 and note.

[2] The treaty will be found in *State Papers*, 1859-60, p. 412.

[3] *Hansard*, vol. clvii. p. 759.

[4] See *Hansard*, vol. clvii. pp. 1254, 1255; *Life of Lord J. Russell*, vol. ii. p. 330; cf. Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 397 *seq.*

Russell struggled to frustrate it, his efforts were foredoomed to failure.[1]

The indignation of Great Britain.

At this distant period, when the fires of a heated controversy have grown cool, and France herself has paid the penalty of her policy by the loss of other provinces, it is perhaps possible to confess that the desire of the Emperor for the annexation of Savoy and Nice was not altogether unnatural. He could argue with some show of reason that France was entitled to some return for the sacrifices which she had made for Italy; and that, if Savoy and Nice were not too high a price for Piedmont to pay for Lombardy and Venetia, their cession was not too high a price to pay for Lombardy and Central Italy. But, if the decision of the Emperor was not unnatural, it was eminently unwise. It made him an object of suspicion throughout Europe, and deprived him of the friendship of this country. It was everywhere felt that the argument, with which the French Government had sustained the annexation of Savoy and Nice, was capable of a wide application. The Rhine, as well as the Alps, might be claimed as the natural frontier of France. Belgium, like Savoy, might be regarded as French in language and sympathies. The whole map of Europe might require reconstruction if the territorial arrangements, which had been sanctioned by treaty, were to be destroyed on such principles as these.

And this feeling, which would have been justifiable anywhere, was specially felt in this country. Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, it is fair to admit, had displayed little respect for the treaties of Vienna

[1] I have not thought it necessary to relate the subsequent correspondence respecting the districts of Chablis and Faucigny in Savoy. For the position of these districts under the treaties of 1815, see *Parl. Papers relating to Italy*, Session 1860, pt. iv. vol. lxvii. p. 17. It seems probable that, if Lord John Russell had confined his efforts to this part of the question, he might have secured the annexation of a considerable portion of the Faucigny district to Switzerland. *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 296, note.

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when the case of Italy had been under consideration; but they regarded those treaties with much more reverence when, in defiance of their provisions, Napoleon proposed to round off his own vineyard. Their views were warmly supported by the public, both in Parliament and out of doors and their position, illogical though it was, deserved the Emperor's respect, for the friendship of England, and of Lord Palmerston, was worth more to his dynasty than even Savoy and Nice. It was a mistake to throw away the advantages of the English alliance, which had done so much to strengthen his throne, for even so tempting a territory as the beautiful districts which fringe the shores of the Mediterranean, or the smiling valleys which lie on the French slopes of the Alps.

How great the estrangement was, which was thus produced, may perhaps be inferred from the language of the leading Ministers. Lord John Russell, finding his remonstrances disregarded, was tempted into making a strong speech in the House of Commons, in which he stated plainly the probable effects of the distrust which the Emperor's action was creating. Lord Palmerston subsequently told the French Ambassador in London that he approved and confirmed his colleague's words; and, when the French Ambassador replied, 'But this is war,' retorted, 'Well, if it is war, we are ready, and shall meet it with firmness.'[1]

The death of Ferdinand II. of Naples.

One chapter in the story of the union of Italy was now complete; but, before the ink with which it had been written had dried, another chapter was already opening. By a strange coincidence Ferdinand II. of Naples, the man whose misrule had done so much to provoke the Italian crisis, died in May 1859, just after

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clvii. p. 1256. Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. ii. p. 77; Lord Malmesbury, *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 518; Ashley's *Palmerston*, vol. ii. p. 391; *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 303.

he had received the news of the first successes of the allied armies. He was succeeded by his son Francis II., who, through his mother,[1] was closely related to the House of Savoy. Perhaps this circumstance encouraged Count Cavour to make a strong effort to induce the Neapolitan Government to throw in its lot with the cause of Italy. The effort was not successful. The influences with which the young King was surrounded proved too strong for him, and he lost the chance which might possibly have averted the catastrophe which was hanging over him.

For some years after 1856, the relations between the United Kingdom and the Neapolitan Court had been strained. The Neapolitan Government had neglected to attend to the remonstrances which Lord Clarendon had addressed to it; and the British Government had shown its sense of the habitual misrule of the Neapolitan Court by withdrawing its Minister from Naples. This tension was aggravated in 1857 by an incident which attracted an extraordinary degree of attention in this country. In June of that year, a Sardinian vessel, the Cagliari, plying between Genoa and Tunis, was seized on her passage by some twenty-five armed men, who were nominally passengers on board of her. These men steered the ship for the island of Ponza, where they broke open the Neapolitan prison, liberated some three hundred prisoners, carried them to Sapri, a village near Policastro in Calabria, and then commenced an insurrection against the Neapolitan Government. The captain of the vessel, on resuming his command, at once steered for Naples with the intention of reporting the facts to his consul and the authorities. On his way thither he was met by two Neapolitan warships, which stopped his ship, and carried it back to Sapri. The

The case of the Cagliari,

[1] She was the saint and martyr of Count Cavour's argument with Victor Emmanuel. *Supra*, p. 220.

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Cagliari was ultimately condemned in a Neapolitan prize court as a good and lawful prize taken in war.

and of the English engineers on board.

The condemnation of the vessel was a question which concerned the courts of Turin and Naples. It so happened, however, that among the crew of the Cagliari were two English engineers, Messrs. Park and Watt. The horrible arrangements of a Neapolitan gaol told severely on the health of these unfortunate men, and one of them actually became temporarily insane and attempted to take his own life. During the whole of 1857, the British Government, only imperfectly informed upon the facts, was inclined to treat the whole question as an affair of law, and to leave the Neapolitan courts to determine whether the vessel had been rightly condemned. Lord Palmerston, indeed, on the 4th of December assured the House of Commons that the men were in good health and well treated.[1] Three days later he had to admit that his previous information in this respect was wrong, and that Messrs. Park and Watt had been the victims of gross ill usage; but he still continued to treat the matter as one of law. 'They are in prison on a charge of having violated Neapolitan law, and all that we have a right to demand is a speedy, fair, open, public trial, with the best legal assistance that can be given them for their defence.'[2] The Conservative Government, in the first instance, adopted the view which Lord Palmerston thus propounded; but the public was not disposed to accept the conclusion at which the official mind had arrived. Mr. Roebuck, who had spoken and voted against Lord Palmerston on the Chinese debate in 1857, declared that the language of the Government was unworthy of a British Minister, and insisted that 'a three-decker in

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlviii. p. 142.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 273. Lord Malmesbury says that out of seven English lawyers consulted, three thought the capture of the vessel was legal, four that it was illegal. *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 431.

the Bay of Naples, within cannon shot of the royal palace,'[1] should have been employed in the protection of British subjects.

While opinion, both in Parliament and out of doors, was calling loudly for vigorous action, the grounds for vigorous action were not plain. The Cagliari case raised many difficult questions of law and fact; and, for some time, the facts were not clear, while, from first to last, the legal advisers of the Government differed from one another on the law. So far as the facts were concerned, there was little or no doubt that the Cagliari had been seized, and her crew overpowered by some passengers on board, who had taken possession of the vessel; but it was not clear whether the crew had resisted to the utmost, or whether they had connived in the seizure.[2] Again, it was not doubtful that the Cagliari had been arrested by a Neapolitan frigate, but it was not clear whether the seizure had taken place in the territorial waters of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, or on the high seas.

The difficulties of the case.

But, if there was doubt as to the facts, there was still more doubt as to the law. While Lord Palmerston was in office, the law officers were divided in opinion as to the jurisdiction of a Neapolitan court over the subjects of a foreign power seized out of the territorial waters of Naples.[3] When Lord Derby succeeded to office, the new law officers were still further divided. Sir Fitzroy Kelly, the Attorney-General, was of opinion that there was no justification for the seizure of the vessel; Sir John Hardinge and Sir Hugh Cairns,

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. pp. 93, 94. The despatch from our consul at Naples, detailing the sufferings of the two men, reached the Foreign Office on the 5th of December, the day after Lord Palmerston's speech. *State Papers*, 1857–58, p. 361.

[2] There was no doubt, for example, that the English engineers on board had worked the engines on her passage to Ponza. They declared, apparently accurately, that they had been forced to do so. The Neapolitan Government tried to show that they were the willing agents of the insurgents.

[3] See *State Papers*, 1857–58, pp. 375, 376.

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the Queen's Advocate and the Solicitor-General, considered, on the contrary, that the seizure of the vessel was justifiable, but that there were no clear grounds for her condemnation.[1]

Though, however, these differences of opinion perplexed the mind and delayed the action of the Foreign Office, there was on one point an agreement. Whether Sir Fitzroy Kelly was right or wrong in thinking that the vessel should not have been seized, neither he nor his colleagues attempted to justify her condemnation. It followed, however, that if the vessel had been wrongly condemned, the detention of her crew could not be justified; and that British subjects had been detained for months in prison, and exposed to the harshest treatment, without excuse. On this point, at any rate, the law officers spoke with a single voice.[2]

The condemnation of the Cagliari was essentially a question for Piedmont; the detention and harsh treatment of her engineers was, however, a British question; and Lord Malmesbury, who had no particular liking for the dispute,[3] decided, perhaps wisely decided, to keep the two questions separate, and to content himself with demanding the release of the men with a substantial compensation of 3,000*l.* for their sufferings.[4]

Had the Neapolitan Government been wise, it would, at once, have yielded to this demand. There would have been no indignity in yielding to a power which, they could not have avoided perceiving, had both the means and the will to enforce her demand. Instead of

[1] See Sir John Hardinge's and Sir Hugh Cairns's opinion in *State Papers*, 1857–58, p. 467; for Sir F. Kelly's opinion, *ibid.*, p. 483.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 463.

[3] 'I am in a singular position on this question. I am made Minister on purpose to resist interference on the part of France with our laws, and I am also expected to keep up a quarrel with Naples in support of interference with their institutions. What a set we are!' *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 430.

[4] For Lord Malmesbury's demand for compensation, *State Papers*, 1857–58, pp. 469–474.

yielding, however, the Ministers of the Court of Naples endeavoured to justify what had been done. They almost forced Lord Malmesbury, in consequence, to argue the larger question, which he had hitherto kept in the background, and to insist on the expediency of restoring the Cagliari to Piedmont. In this controversy, it was certain that the strength of England would, sooner or later, prevail against the weakness of Naples; and, as a matter of fact, in the middle of June, Lord Malmesbury had the satisfaction to announce that he had obtained the compensation that he had demanded for Messrs. Park and Watt, and that the Cagliari had been surrendered to England.[1]

The Cagliari released, and the English engineers compensated for their treatment.

In surrendering the vessel to England, and not to Piedmont, the Neapolitan Government probably consulted its own reputation. It thought that, without loss of dignity, it might yield to a great power what it could not concede to a small one. It acted as, a year later, Austria acted in surrendering Lombardy to France instead of to Piedmont. The settlement of the dispute undoubtedly increased Lord Malmesbury's reputation. He had succeeded where Lord Palmerston had failed; and men did not care to recollect that the mere lapse of time and the proceedings of the Neapolitan courts had given the new Minister an advantage over the outgoing Ministry.

The settlement of this dispute ultimately paved the way for another arrangement. For some time past diplomatic relations had been suspended between the Court of Naples and this country. The release of the Cagliari and the compensation of the English engineers removed one reason for not renewing them. The death of Ferdinand facilitated their renewal. It was natural to hope that a new king might avoid the errors or crimes of his predecessor, and that great inducements

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cl. p. 1915.

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Diplomatic relations with Naples renewed.

for his good conduct might be afforded by the presence of a judicious Englishman at his Court. For this reason, Lord John Russell, who had now succeeded Lord Malmesbury at the Foreign Office, decided to send a Minister to Naples, and to select his own brother-in-law, Mr. Henry Elliot, for the post. Mr. Elliot could speak at Naples with the weight which naturally attached to the brother-in-law of the Foreign Minister, and he enjoyed the subsidiary advantage of being the son of the Lord Minto whose mission to Italy ten years before had done so much to promote the confidence with which Italians looked to Great Britain.[1] His appointment enabled Lord John Russell to urge the claims of justice on the Neapolitan Government. 'You will press strongly,' so he wrote on the 6th of July, 'on the principal minister of the Crown the necessity of abolishing as soon as possible the despotism of the police. . . . To keep men in prison without trial; to place them under a zealous and suspicious police . . . is contrary to every principle of justice; it is also a violation of the code by which the Neapolitan Government professes to be guided. It was the open, systematic, and continued violation of justice which induced her Majesty's Government to suspend friendly relations with Naples. Perhaps the best course would be to summon a representative assembly, and frame with their assistance laws by which arbitrary government may be checked. But, at all events, some steps in favour of liberal institutions are absolutely required, in order to prevent an outburst of discontent which can only be suppressed by military force.'[2] He added on the following day,[3] 'Her Majesty's Government fully admit that it is not desirable that any Government

[1] For Lord Minto's mission, see *Hist. of England*, vol. v. p. 382.

[2] Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Naples, *Parl. Papers*, 1860, vol. lxviii. pp. 12, 13.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 14, 15.

should be hasty or intrusive in giving advice regarding domestic changes in another country; but, when the throne of an ally may be endangered, it becomes the duty of a friendly power to say that, notwithstanding its desire to see the present dynasty maintained on the throne of Naples, neither the moral nor the material support of England is to be looked for by the King if, by a continual denial of justice, and the refusal of an improved form of internal administration, the Neapolitan people should be driven into insurrection and should succeed in expelling the present dynasty from the throne.' 'We wish well to the Neapolitan dynasty,' he wrote some months later. 'But we cannot blind ourselves to some obvious truths. It is evident that the commonest rules of justice are not observed by the King of Naples towards his subjects; that the exasperation caused by oppression is the parent of plots, assassinations, conspiracies, and insurrections. . . . Should such conspiracies endanger the throne of his Sicilian Majesty, her Majesty's Government can only lament the blindness which afflicts his council. But her Majesty's Government will neither accept any part of their responsibility, nor undertake to ward off the consequences of a misgovernment which has scarcely a parallel in Europe.'[1]

Few Foreign Ministers have ever used plainer language than that which Lord John Russell thus addressed to the Neapolitan Government; and few Sovereigns have more fully deserved such remonstrances and warnings than Francis II. On his accession, indeed, he had given some slight promise of a wiser policy. (i) He had pardoned the persons who still

[1] Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Naples, *Parl. Papers*, 1860, vol. lxviii. p. 38. Lord Palmerston used similar language. He actually told the Neapolitan Minister at the Queen's drawing-room that a revolution would probably be the consequence of the proceedings of the Neapolitan Government and the conduct of the King; he added that this 'would be nothing more than they deserved, and would be seen in this country with universal satisfaction.' *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 310.

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The misgovernment of Naples.

languished in prison and in exile for political offences committed, more than ten years before, in 1848 and 1849. (ii) He had relieved the 'attendibili,' who were described by Mr. Elliot as persons 'soupçonnés d'être suspects,'[1] from the disabilities which had prevented them travelling within the kingdom, which had excluded them from public employment, and which even deprived them of the ordinary distinctions of a university career. (iii) He had authorised the return of 137 Sicilian exiles.[2] But it was soon evident that even these limited concessions were valueless. There was not much significance in pardoning a few persons who had suffered for ten years, when no favour was shown to the much larger number of persons who had been the victims of later acts of tyranny The permission to the attendibili to travel was practically, at once, revoked by a private order to the police;[3] and none of the 137 exiles ventured to avail themselves of the right to return to their country, since they knew that they would expose themselves, at once, to police supervision and police despotism. The grievances of the Sicilians and the Neapolitans mainly arose, indeed, from the harsh conduct of an uncontrolled police. It was a common course for men to be thrown into prison and to be kept in prison for months without trial. In one prison alone in 1859 forty-eight persons had been so confined for two years

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1860, vol. lxviii. p. 27. M. Ollivier says that on the death of Ferdinand II. there were no fewer than 180,000 attendibili. *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 430, note. Sir H. Elliot says 150,000, *Diplomatic Recollections*, p. 13. He adds: 'They were placed at the absolute discretion of the police of their districts. They were of all classes, from the large landed proprietors and tradesmen down to the peasant, and were said to number some 150,000 persons. They could not move from the *rayon* assigned to them: the proprietor could not visit his neighbour, and the peasant could not carry his produce to the market town if it lay beyond his bounds. On the slightest suspicion, or even without it, this surveillance could be changed to close imprisonment at the mere caprice of the police, from which there was no appeal.'

[2] *Parl. Papers respecting Naples*, Session 1860, vol. lxviii. pp. 3–7 and 11.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 31.

and a half without any knowledge of the cause of their arbitrary arrest;[1] and, in the beginning of 1860, the Government openly avowed its intention of so detaining men suspected of revolutionary tendencies, and of transporting them or exiling them without trial or examination.[2]

Like Rehoboam, Bombino—for so Francis II. was called[3]—was making his little finger as thick as one of his father's loins, and, like Rehoboam, Bombino was on the eve of reaping the fruits of his policy. Disturbances, or insurrections, broke out in Sicily in the beginning of 1860; and the royal troops proved, in many cases, unable to quell the disorders. Throughout April the issue was uncertain, and Europe observed with anxiety that one more Italian throne was tottering to its fall. The news of insurrection in Sicily naturally excited deep emotions in other parts of Italy; and, at the end of April, General Garibaldi, with a thousand men, left Genoa, and sailed to the assistance of the insurgents. There is no reason for thinking that, in taking this course, General Garibaldi acted at the direct instigation of Count Cavour. On the contrary, at the moment he was angry with the great Piedmontese statesman for the cession of Nice, his native city, to France. It is probable, indeed, that Count Cavour actually regretted the General's attempt as rash and premature. Five weeks before General Garibaldi's sailing, he told the representative of his Court at Naples that it was the interest of Italy to preserve the *status quo* for several years.[4] But,

General Garibaldi joins the Sicilian insurgents.

[1] Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Naples, *Parl. Papers*, 1860, vol. lxviii. p. 8. Sir H. Elliot says that a Neapolitan Minister told him that there was nothing irregular in the detention of a man who had completed the term of his imprisonment, as at Naples no prisoner was discharged on the expiration of his sentence unless the police considered that it might be done without disadvantage, p. 23.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

[3] Bombino, the diminutive of Bomba, the nickname given to his father after the bombardment of his Sicilian cities.

[4] 'Je crois qu'il nous conviendrait que l'état actuel des choses durât encore quelques années.' *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. 236.

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if he was not prepared to approve, he was certainly not inclined either to check or to condemn the expedition. No attempts were made to stop its sailing; no real attempts were made to prevent a landing in Sicily; the best friends of the Minister did not hesitate to help the General. It would have been an error of statesmanship, so Count Cavour thought, to oppose the expedition.[1]

When the expedition arrived off the coast of Sicily, at Marsala, no real obstacle existed to its landing. Two English vessels of war watched the disembarkation, but took no steps to interfere. Neapolitan vessels of war arrived while the operation was going on, but were either wanting in courage or in will to stop it.[2] General

[1] 'Molti dei nostri amici e dei più devoti la [la spedizione] secondavano. Dovera io mettermi in opposizione con questi? Sarebbe stato un errore che avrebbe creato difficoltà gravissime nell' interno.' *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. 251. The expedition left the neighbourhood of Genoa on the evening of the 5th of May. On the 7th Cavour telegraphed to the governor of the island of Sardinia, placing Admiral Persano under his orders, and desiring him to stop the expedition if it put into a Sardinian port: an order which reminds the reader of the equally useful order sent from London to Cork, Beaumaris, and Holyhead to stop the Alabama if she happened to put into any of those ports. But on the 8th the governor was further directed not to stop the vessels on the high seas, but only if they entered a port. Admiral Persano was in some doubt as to the precise meaning of these instructions, and asked whether he was to stop the expedition in the event of it putting into port through stress of weather. Count Cavour replied, 'The Ministry decides for the arrest.' Admiral Persano presumed from these words that Count Cavour did not agree with his Cabinet, and telegraphed back, 'Ho capito.' *Ibid.*, pp. 245, 246, 247 and note. Sir H. Elliot, indeed (*Diplomatic Recollections*, pp. 25–28), accuses Count Cavour of a direct share in the preparation of the expedition; but I believe that the account which I have given in the text represents Count Cavour's position with accuracy.

[2] The Neapolitan commander said his fire was obliged to be suspended to give two English steamers, which had arrived a few hours before, time to take on board their officers, who were on shore; but there appears to have been no ground for this statement. Further Correspondence respecting the Landing of General Garibaldi in Sicily, *Parl. Papers*, 1860, vol. lxviii., cf. pp. 2, 6, and 7. M. de la Gorce, however, has reproduced the Neapolitan account without the contradiction (*Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 382), as has also the editor of the *Secret de l'Empereur*, vol. i. p. 154. Lord J. Russell's account of the incident will be found in *Hansard*, vol. clviii. p. 1403, and cf. p. 1406. It is fair to add that Madame Cesaresco, quoting Signor Crispi, thinks that the landing could not have been effected if the English ships had not been present. Cesaresco's *Cavour*, p. 180.

Garibaldi was thus able to land his men in good order; four days later, on the 14th of May, he assumed the title of Dictator of Sicily in the name of Victor Emmanuel.

These events, so startling both in their conception and in their success, naturally created a feeling of consternation in the chancelleries of Europe. In this country Lord Brougham said that 999 out of every 1,000 people heartily wished for Garibaldi's success;[1] and, true to their policy of securing Italy for the Italians, Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell watched with satisfaction General Garibaldi's progress. Lord John, indeed, went so far as to say in the House of Commons, 'We know that our sympathies and the judgment of history will distinguish between the cases of the filibuster and felon, and that of the hero and the patriot. We all remember that we had once a great filibuster, who landed, in the month of November 1688, on the south-west coast of England. . . . That filibustering was completely successful.' In fact, Lord John Russell's anxiety was not aroused by General Garibaldi's conduct, but by the apprehension, which was stimulated by prevalent reports that, in the event of any further acquisition of territory by Sardinia, France would demand, and the Italian Government would make, the cession to France of Liguria, or of the island of Sardinia, or of both. He was also alarmed at the possibility that, where General Garibaldi had gone, Piedmontese troops might follow, and that Sardinia might rashly engage in a fresh war either with Naples or with Austria; and he called on Count Cavour to reassure him on both points.[2] On the 30th of May,

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clix. p. 1379.

[2] See the statements on these points made in Parliament. *Vide, inter alia, Hansard*, vol. clxiv. pp. 1189-1242. The suspicion was not unnatural; indeed, Sir H. Elliot says that the French Minister at Naples went so far as to declare that the annexation [of Sicily to Piedmont] would make the cession to France of the island of Sardinia indispensable. *Diplomatic Recollections*, p. 31.

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Count Cavour gave the required pledge. He declared without any hesitation that the Government of the King, even to deliver Venice from a foreign yoke, would not consent to cede one inch of Italian territory. He promised carefully to 'abstain from any act of aggression towards Austria as long as that power shall abstain loyally on her side from any act which might violate the great principle of non-intervention.' As regards the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, while making the same declaration, he frankly admitted that 'it would be impossible for the Government of his Majesty to prevent by force any manifestations of sympathy by the Italian populations for the populations of Sicily or the kingdom of Naples.'[1]

The attitude of the British Government.

Partially reassured by these pledges, which were strengthened by a statement of M. Thouvenel that the Emperor of the French had no more designs upon Sardinia than the British Government had designs upon Sicily,[2] the British Government was free to address itself to the general question. The Government of France had already intimated its desire to act in accord with Great Britain; and both France and Great Britain were, to a certain extent, of the same opinion. Both Governments were afraid that the events which were rapidly occurring in Sicily would lead to further complications. The movement which had already emancipated the greater part of the island from the Neapolitan Government might spread, so they feared, to Naples; if Naples shook off the Bourbon yoke, the insurrection would inevitably extend to Umbria and

[1] *Parl. Papers respecting Italy*, Session 1861, vol. lxvii. p. 22. Count Cavour carried out honourably the declaration so far as Austria was concerned. He carried out literally the promise towards Naples and Sicily. But he was actually at the very moment encouraging a pronunciamiento by the Neapolitan fleet, and promising its officers, if they deserted the cause of their King for the cause of Italy, a brilliant and assured career. *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. 254 *seq.*

[2] Further Correspondence relating to the Affairs of Italy, *Parl. Papers*, 1861, vol. lxvii. p. 29.

the Marches; and, if Southern Italy were free, and General Garibaldi were successful in the Two Sicilies and in the States of the Church, nothing would apparently prevent him from attacking Venetia. Austria would thus obtain an excuse, or a justification, for renewing the contest; and, if Austria and Italy were again engaged in a death struggle, France might find it necessary to intervene, and Europe might be involved in a new war. To avoid this contingency, the Emperor of the French was anxious to concert an alliance between Naples and Sardinia; to arrange a truce in Sicily; and to insist on Bombino dealing liberally with his revolted subjects. Lord John Russell was equally ready to stop the combat, but he declined to recommend the truce which the Emperor desired, unless it was understood that, if on its termination any attempt should be made to impose by force a government on Sicily, Sardinia herself should be free to assist the Sicilians.[1]

The negotiations for the truce fell through.[2] Count Cavour said with perfect truth that he could not stop General Garibaldi. The General had never forgiven Count Cavour for assenting to the cession of his native city (Nice) to France, and was not ready to accept advice from the Sardinian Government. He had even obliged M. la Farina, whom the Sardinian Government had sent to Sicily, to leave the island.[3] He was determined, though acting in the name of Victor Emmanuel, to carry out his policy in his own way. The negotiations for the truce proved, therefore, barren of results. A mission, which the Neapolitan Government sent to

[1] Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Italy, *Parl. Papers*, 1861, vol. lxvii. p. 31.

[2] Count Cavour was only willing to negotiate the alliance on three conditions: (1) Naples should renounce the Austrian alliance; (2) Naples should join Sardinia in urging the Pope to adopt a national policy; (3) Naples should abandon every attempt to reconquer Sicily. See *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. 273, and cf. Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. ii. p. 89.

[3] *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. 283.

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Turin, to Paris, and London, proved equally ineffectual; and, before the end of July, the Neapolitans were compelled to evacuate Sicily,[1] and Garibaldi was free to consider the possibility of crossing from the island to the mainland. At this moment France came forward with a fresh programme: M. Thouvenel proposed that the British and French squadrons should inform General Garibaldi that they would not permit him to cross the Straits of Messina. The British Cabinet declined to assent to this proposal. They considered that its adoption would be a departure from the general principle of non-intervention; and they went on to argue that the force of General Garibaldi was not in itself sufficient to overthrow the Neapolitan monarchy; that 'if the navy, army, and people of Naples were attached to the King, Garibaldi would be defeated; if, on the contrary, they were disposed to welcome Garibaldi, our interference would be an intervention in the internal affairs of the Neapolitan kingdom.'[2] In short, the people of Naples, like the people of Sicily, should be left to regulate their own affairs.

France proposes, and England refuses, to stop Garibaldi crossing the Straits.

In taking up this position Lord John Russell rendered a great service to the cause of Italian unity. The freedom of Naples might have been postponed for many years if Garibaldi had been prevented from crossing

[1] Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Italy, *Parl. Papers*, 1861, vol. lxvii. p. 41.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 40, 41; cf. p. 53. The difference between the two Governments arose partly from their opposite views as to what constituted intervention. M. Thouvenel regarded the presence of Garibaldi in Sicily as intervention. Lord John Russell apparently considered that in the existing state of Italy the intervention of Italians, although they might not be Sicilians, for the purpose of rescuing Sicily from the bad government to which she had been so long subjected, could not fairly be considered in the same light as the intervention of foreign Governments. M. Thouvenel consequently thought that, in stopping Garibaldi from crossing the Straits, he would be preventing intervention. Lord John Russell considered that the act would be an act of intervention. Technically M. Thouvenel's position was the more logical. It may be added that, according to M. de Persigny, Lord Palmerston was, at first, in favour of stopping Garibaldi. *Mémoires*, p. 274.

the Straits. But this was not the only service which he rendered to Italy. It was the assurance of his support which strengthened Count Cavour's hands, and determined him to accept any offers of union from either Sicily or Naples. The Count's correspondence shows that he knew that, in this policy, he would have to reckon with the opposition of France; but that he was prepared to brave the opposition of France because he was assured of the moral help of Britain.[1]

And events were rapidly developing. Victor Emmanuel was indeed persuaded to write to General Garibaldi and urge him not to cross the Straits.[2] But the General replied that he had a mission to complete, and that on its completion he would lay his authority at his Majesty's feet. On the 19th of August he crossed the Straits and entered Calabria; on the 6th of September the wretched Bourbon king, finding that he could neither rely on the people whom he had misgoverned, nor on the army which he had collected in his defence, withdrew from Naples to Gaeta; and, on the 7th of September, Garibaldi entered Naples:[3] it was after-

General Garibaldi enters Naples.

[1] He wrote to the Marquis de Villa Marina at Naples on the 7th of July: 'Mon programme est de ne pas imposer l'annexion, mais de braver tous les dangers pour le faire si les populations la réclament.' He telegraphed to the same correspondent on the same day. 'Tenez-vous plus raide que jamais. Angleterre m'a fait dire qu'elle trouve nos propositions très modérées. Ne vous laissez intimider par Brenier [the French Ambassador at Naples]. Sicile doit être libre de disposer de son sort. Aucune transaction sur ce point.' *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. 281.

[2] Emile Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 455. Sir H. Elliot says that Victor Emmanuel—no doubt upon the demand of the Emperor Napoleon—sent an envoy to Garibaldi asking him not to cross the Straits; but Count Cavour sent a message to Admiral Persano along with the King's envoy, desiring the Admiral to congratulate General Garibaldi on his victories, and adding, 'I cannot see what there is to prevent him from passing over to the continent. I should have preferred that the Neapolitans themselves should accomplish at least the beginning of the work of regeneration; but, as they will not or cannot move, let Garibaldi act. The enterprise cannot stop halfway.' Again, 'The problem we have to solve is this: to help the revolution, but to help it in such a way that it may appear in the eyes of Europe to have been a spontaneous act.' *Diplomatic Recollections*, p. 29; *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. 295.

[3] *Ann. Reg.*, 1860, Hist., p. 228 *seq.*; *Parl. Papers respecting Italy*, Session 1861, vol. lxvii. pp. 41, 62.

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wards said in the House of Commons, 'as a simple traveller by a railway with a first-class ticket.'[1]

Garibaldi threatens to advance on Rome.

These surprising successes, though they delighted the best friends of Italy, filled them at the same time with anxiety. Garibaldi made no secret of his intention 'to push on at once to Rome.' When that city should have fallen, he proposed 'to offer the crown of a united Italy to King Victor Emmanuel, upon whom [would] then devolve the task of the liberation of Venetia.'[2] But this declaration naturally aroused the fears of diplomatists. Rome, the centre of Catholic Europe, was held by a French garrison. The Emperor had maintained the garrison, which he had previously thought of withdrawing, in consequence of Garibaldi's expedition to Sicily.[3] It was obvious, therefore, that, if Garibaldi carried out his purpose of attacking Rome, he would almost necessarily be brought into conflict with the troops of France; and, in such a contest, victory seemed almost worse than defeat, for it required no perspicacity to see that France could not look on unmoved at the defeat of a French army under a French general. The new conflict must, therefore, almost necessarily lead to a fresh intervention, in which the French, instead of fighting for the friends of Italy, would be forced to fight against them.

Garibaldi himself made light of these dangers. He had no alternative but to go to Rome, and to Rome he should go. Rome was an Italian city, and neither the Emperor nor anyone else had a right to keep him out of it. Count Cavour, indeed, through his fear of the Emperor, had dragged Sardinia through the mud by

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxvi. p. 887. He 'arrived by railroad, accompanied by about a third of his staff, two or three newspaper correspondents, and four or five sympathisers who had hooked on to him.' *Diplomatic Recollections*, p. 94.

[2] See General Garibaldi's statement to Mr. Elliot, *ibid.*, p. 99.

[3] *Parl. Papers respecting Italy*, 1861, vol. lxvii. p. 8, and cf. *Le Secret de l'Empereur*, vol. i. pp. 146, 148, and 154.

ceding Savoy to him; but, for his own part, he was not afraid of France, and would not have consented to such a humiliation.[1] To Rome, therefore, he was going; and whether Rome were in the custody of French troops or not, Rome he should attack.

The probability of a conflict between Garibaldi's followers and a division of the French army was serious. But there was another danger hardly less formidable. The Pope had enlisted a considerable number of Roman Catholic volunteers, drawn from Ireland, Austria, France, and other nations, for the defence of his dominions; and he had given the command of them to General Lamoricière, an officer who had done good service under Louis Philippe in Algeria, who had filled the post of War Minister under Cavaignac, but who had been banished from France after the *coup d'état* in 1851. Some of Napoleon's most intimate counsellors had protested against the Emperor's allowing an officer opposed to the Empire to assume the command of the Papal troops. The Emperor, however, affected to consider that Lamoricière could do more harm in France than he could accomplish in the Romagna, and allowed him to go.[2] So long as General Garibaldi remained in Sicily, no great inconvenience resulted from this permission; but, when the dictator had reached Naples, and was preparing to invade the Roman territory, grave dangers became obviously imminent. The people of Umbria and the Marches, elated by the victory of their fellow-Italians in the Two Sicilies, were visibly ripe for some revolutionary movement; and Count Cavour declared that it was impossible to allow an Italian rising to be stamped out by a French general at the head of

[1] *Parl. Papers respecting Italy*, Session 1861, vol. lxvii. pp. 69, 70.

[2] *Mémoires de Persigny*, p. 268. The Duc de Gramont, the French Ambassador at Rome, had no foreknowledge of the character of General Lamoricière's appointment. See *Le Secret de l'Empereur*, vol. i. p. 106, and cf. as to Lamoricière, E. Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 425.

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foreign mercenaries. No doubt, this consideration was rather the pretext than the reason for the new policy on which he decided. In reality, he felt that the time had come when it was no longer right to leave General Garibaldi at the head of the great movement which he had invested with all the brilliance of success. If General Garibaldi were uncontrolled, nothing could prevent an attack upon Rome, and probably an invasion of Venetia, and consequently a conflict with the two great empires of France and Austria. Common prudence seemed, therefore, to necessitate that Piedmont herself should anticipate the General, and take the regulation of the revolution in the Romagna into her own hands.

Count Cavour sends a message to Napoleon.

In carrying out so bold a policy it was obviously necessary to arrive at some understanding with the French Emperor, and, as Napoleon was visiting Savoy, Count Cavour sent two of his friends, M. de Farini and General Cialdini, to Chambéry to arrive at an understanding with him. Even the details of the famous meeting at Plombières were not kept more secret than the records of this interview; but there can be no doubt that the Emperor sanctioned the bold policy which Count Cavour suggested to him, and even looked forward with satisfaction to General Lamoricière's discomfiture.[1] The Emperor, indeed—for no other explanation of an almost unintelligible policy can be suggested—seems to have concluded that there was only one way out of an otherwise inextricable tangle; and that the intervention of Piedmont could alone arrest the

[1] Count Cavour's words are: 'Farini et Cialdini sont revenus ce matin (29 août, 1860) de Chambéry. L'Empereur a été parfait. Farini, d'après le conseil de Conneau [the medical man who arranged the Plombières meeting, *ante*, p. 214 note], lui a expliqué en détail le plan que nous avons adopté. Le voici en peu de mots. Il est trop tard pour empêcher Garibaldi d'arriver à Naples, et d'y être proclamé dictateur. Ne pouvant prévenir Garibaldi à Naples, il faut l'arrêter ailleurs . . . dans l'Ombrie et dans les Marches. L'Empereur a tout approuvé. Il paraît même que l'idée de voir Lamoricière aller se faire lui a souri beaucoup.' *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. iii. p. 353.

progress of Garibaldi; but, while he certainly approved the course which Count Cavour recommended, while he was even anxious that the deed which was to be done, should be done at once,[1] he wished to conceal his own share in it from his wife, from his Minister, and from his subjects. If, indeed, it is legitimate to infer the conclusions of the conference from the events to which it led, it seems probable that, in giving Piedmont a free hand, provided the city of Rome was not attacked, he intimated that he might have to mark his disapproval of a policy, to which he was consenting, by withdrawing his ambassador from Turin.

The ultimatum to the Pope.

Reassured by the news which he had received from Chambéry, Count Cavour, on the 8th of September, addressed an ultimatum to the Pope, calling upon him to dismiss his foreign mercenaries. The 'monstrous' demand—the epithet is M. Thouvenel's—created almost as much sensation at Paris as at Rome. M. Thouvenel, who was already nervously anxious about the exact nature of the Chambéry conference, and who had just offered to join the Emperor at Marseilles, where he was on his way to Algiers,[2] proposed at once to send an ultimatum to Piedmont, stating that if France did not receive a definite assurance that the note addressed to the Papal Government would not be followed up, and that the Piedmontese troops would not attack the pontifical forces, diplomatic relations with Turin would at once be broken off, and France would place herself in

[1] According to General Cialdini, who says that the Emperor himself revised the plan of the campaign (*Le Secret de l'Empereur*, vol. i. p. 252), the Emperor's words to Farini and himself were, 'Bonne chance et faites vite,' *ibid.*, p. 237, or, according to another version, 'Allez et faites vite.' General della Rocca says that 'the injunctions verbally made to our envoys were repeated in an autograph letter from the Emperor to Victor Emmanuel, which I saw: 'Allez, allez, et surtout faites vite.' *Recollections of a Veteran*, p. 180. In face of this testimony I cannot accept M. Ollivier's account, which the student, however, should consult. *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 476 and note.

[2] De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 416.

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antagonism to a policy which, in the interests of Europe and of Italy, it was not sufficient merely to disavow.[1] The Emperor, instead of sanctioning the delivery of this ultimatum, contented himself with despatching a much milder remonstrance to the Piedmontese King. In this, after reminding his brother sovereign of his devotion to the Italian cause, he declared that he could not approve the methods which Count Cavour was employing, and he added that, if it were true that without sufficient cause (*sans raison légitime*) the troops of Piedmont entered the States of the Church, he would be forced to oppose (*je serai forcé de m'y opposer*).[2] The Emperor had effectually altered the character of the remonstrance which M. Thouvenel had proposed to send. He had toned down his Minister's language, and had converted an ultimatum into a friendly message. M. Thouvenel had wished to make the entrance of the Piedmontese troops into the Papal territory a ground of war. The Emperor had signified that if they entered it without sufficient cause he would be forced to oppose.

The Emperor's Minister at Paris and his representative at Rome, indeed, imperfectly informed of their master's real mind, inferred that the Emperor would forcibly resist any Piedmontese invasion of Papal territory. They put, in other words, the strongest meaning on their master's phrase, 'I shall be forced to oppose;' and they attached no importance to the all-important provision that the opposition would depend on the

[1] De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 417.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 418. M. Ollivier, oddly enough, makes no mention of the Emperor's despatch, and assumes that M. Thouvenel's original ultimatum was actually delivered. *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 478. M. de Persigny had urged the Emperor to entrust the defence of Rome to General Lamoricière, and to send his own troops from Rome to the frontier. He evidently thought that he had persuaded the Emperor to adopt this policy. *Mémoires*, pp. 270–274. The Duc de Gramont, the French Ambassador at Rome, had previously given the same advice. *Le Secret de l'Empereur*, vol. iii. pp. 107, 108.

sufficiency of the cause which prompted the invasion. The Duc de Gramont, in conveying to the Papal Government the purport of the Emperor's despatch, added, on his own account, that the Emperor would not allow the culpable invasion of pontifical territory by the Piedmontese Government;[1] and M. de Mérode,[2] the energetic and warlike priest, who shared with Cardinal Antonelli the confidence of the Pope, by a slight rearrangement of words succeeded in placing a still more warlike interpretation on the Emperor's language. Writing in great haste to General Lamoricière, he changed the phrase 'L'Empereur sera forcé de s'opposer' into 'L'Empereur s'opposera par la force.'[3]

The Emperor's folly in concealing his real intentions from his Minister was producing fateful consequences to the cause of the Pope and the reputation of France: to the cause of the Pope, for his advisers were induced to believe that the bayonets of the French stood behind the sword of General Lamoricière; to the reputation of France, for the menace, which the world understood to have been uttered, was to be followed by retreat. But, if the Emperor's own advisers were deceived as to his real intentions, neither General Cialdini on the frontier nor Count Cavour at Turin was misled by his language. General Cialdini continued his march, and Count Cavour, in approving his conduct, repeated the Emperor's own language, 'Strike quickly.'[4] Thus instructed, General Cialdini crossed the frontier; on the 18th of September, General Lamoricière was decisively defeated at Castelfidardo; in October, Victor Emmanuel, at the head of his army, entered Naples; in November, the people of Naples and the Marches pronounced for

The Papal troops defeated at Castelfidardo.

[1] De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 420.

[2] For the character and position of M. de Mérode, see *ibid.*, p. 363.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 419. and see *Le Secret de l'Empereur*, vol. i. p. 273.

[4] 'L' importante è di far presto.' *Lettere di Cavour*, vol. vi. pp. 597, 598. De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 421.

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Naples one and indivisible. General Garibaldi, his work accomplished, returned to Caprera; and the Emperor, to show at any rate some outward disapproval of proceedings which he had privately endorsed, recalled his Minister from Turin.[1]

Gaeta, for a few months longer, protected by a French fleet,[2] held out for its old King. Rome, for some years longer, protected by a French garrison, remained under the government of the Church. Venice, protected by Austrian bayonets and the Quadrilateral, languished, till 1866, under Austrian rule. But, with these exceptions, the great work of constituting a free and united Italy was accomplished. In place of a Piedmont with 4,000,000 or 5,000,000 people, King Victor Emmanuel became the constitutional sovereign of 22,000,000 Italians. The world has seen few revolutions so great, and few changes so beneficial.

The union of Italy.

In accomplishing this great work, Italy owed much to the services of many of her children; but chief among them it is right to mention three great names, King Victor Emmanuel, General Garibaldi, and Count Cavour. 'The true liberator of Italy,' said Baron Ricasoli afterwards in the Italian Chamber, 'was the King, under whom they had all worked.'[3] And the historian who considers what the King risked, what he did, and what he refrained from doing, will hardly dispute the verdict. Yet the King could have done nothing without the sword of General Garibaldi and the brain

[1] See on these events M. Thouvenel in *Le Secret de l'Empereur*, vol. i. pp. 204, 210. Count Cavour openly boasted that he held the Emperor by a tie which he could not break, and M. Thouvenel's editor thinks that this tie was a beautiful stranger who acted at the Tuileries as an Italian spy. *Ibid.*, pp. 212, 223, note. The lady referred to was, I presume, Madame de Castiglione. For this lady, see Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. i. p. 292, and cf. Della Rocca, *Recollections of a Veteran*, p. 123.

[2] The instructions to the French Admiral at Gaeta will be found in *Le Secret de l'Empereur*, vol. i. pp. 269–271.

[3] Countess Cesaresco's *Cavour*, p. 211.

of Count Cavour. Military success will always strike the imagination of the many, while statesmanship will only commend itself to the judgment of the few; and the general in the red shirt may arrest the popular gaze when the statesman in his spectacles is forgotten. Yet it is fair to recollect that the task of the general was a far easier one than that of the statesman. The general's surprising success was due to the fact that the fruit which he gathered was already ripe to fall. As Lord John Russell said, with characteristic cynicism, to the representative of Bombino in London, 'It is perfectly clear that, if the King of the Two Sicilies had not been misled by bad advisers, Garibaldi could not, with 2,000 men, have overthrown the monarchy.'[1]

The share of Count Cavour in the work.

The task of Count Cavour was a much harder one. In preparing Piedmont for the great work of liberating Italy, in securing her a position in the council chambers of Europe, in concluding an arrangement with the Emperor of the French, in forcing him to adhere to the conditions to which he had agreed, in braving the opposition of Austria, and in ignoring the remonstrances of continental Europe, Count Cavour showed a capacity in devising plans and a courage in executing them, which have been displayed by few statesmen. To him, more than to any other man, Italy owes her freedom and her unity. To him alone she owes her constitution. In achieving this great work he did many things to which it is easy to take exception. It is, indeed, ethically difficult to justify the arrangements of Plombières, the tacit connivance at General Garibaldi's expedition, and the open invasion of the Marches in 1860; but if, in these respects, the conscience cannot wholly approve the means by which Count Cavour secured the end at which the heart rejoices, it is right to recollect that no great minister, even in our own

[1] Further Papers respecting Italy, *Parl. Papers*, 1861, pt. vii. p. 122.

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country, has shown a greater desire to work by constitutional methods. He realised, as few men have realised, that his strength was in the support of his Legislature; his justification in the approval of his Legislature. If he proved, over and over again, in the council chamber of Europe that he stood a head and shoulders above the diplomatists of his time, he proved over and over again in the Piedmontese Chamber that in a parliament he was a born leader of men.

The share of Napoleon III. in the work.

If Italy owes much to the great men who never despaired of her future in the hour of her defeat, and who were ready to do and to dare in the hour of her opportunity, she is also indebted to the French Emperor who brought her material support in 1859, and to the English statesmen who gave her moral support in the long months of trial which succeeded Villafranca. The character of the Third Napoleon, his greatness and his weakness, were exemplified in his Italian policy. He displayed, throughout, that strange combination of resolution and irresolution which ultimately brought him to ruin. 'Rêveur et conspirateur toujours,' he conspired to carry out a dream. He dreamed of an Italy liberated from Austria, of a France extended to her natural boundaries, of reviving the glories of the First Empire on the scenes in which his uncle had achieved fame. He kept his purpose secret from his own advisers and communicated them to Count Cavour; and, in doing so, he placed his fortunes in the hands of a statesman whose will was as strong as his own was weak, who knew how to practise both on his ambition and on his fears, and to exact pledges which it seemed easy for a dreamer to give, but which proved, over and over again, inconvenient for a statesman to fulfil.

The dream which the Emperor dreamed, and to which he clung from first to last, was of an Italian federation. He thought that, if Italy were divided

into three kingdoms, and if her 'natural' frontiers were restored to his own Empire, political France would be satisfied that her ascendency would be adequately protected, and that the new federation on the south-east would be no more dangerous than the old federation on the north-east. He thought that, if the nominal presidency of the new federation were assigned to the Pope, Catholic France would be reconciled to the material losses which the Papacy might sustain. And to the idea, which he had thus conceived at the beginning, he clung till the end. It never occurred to him that the arm which had proved strong enough to drive the Austrian behind the Mincio would be impotent beyond the Po; and that the countries which he had freed from their old rulers would insist on disposing of their own destinies, instead of blindly adopting his advice.

From first to last, moreover, the dreamer and the conspirator kept dream and conspiracy a secret. He forbore to communicate to Count Walewski the arrangements of Plombières; he failed equally to communicate to M. Thouvenel the arrangements which he made at Chambéry.[1] Thus it happened that, both in 1859 and in 1860, the voice of the French Foreign Office was not the voice of the French Emperor: officially the French Government seemed aiming at one object, while privately the French Emperor was aiming at another. The policy of the Emperor, in these circumstances, seemed a policy of indecision; and France and her Emperor reaped the consequences and suffered the discredit which result from indecision. France desired to prevent the union of Central Italy with Piedmont, and the union was effected; France was anxious to confine

[1] The Duc de Gramont complained to M. Thouvenel that he had been completely deceived by the Emperor's language. *Le Secret de l'Empereur*, vol. i. p. 277.

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General Garibaldi to Sicily, and the General crossed the Straits; France protested against the occupation of Papal territory by Piedmontese troops, and General Cialdini fought the battle of Castelfidardo and inflicted a decisive defeat on a French general. France was even protecting Bombino at Gaeta, and France had to submit to the surrender of the King. In Count Cavour's hands, the Emperor found himself reduced to doing what he could, instead of doing what he would.[1]

No people readily submit to a series of discomfitures. To a susceptible people like the French, they became absolutely insupportable. The Emperor's firmest friend himself said, 'In allowing these events to take place, the Emperor threw his whole policy into inextricable confusion. In the eyes of all Europe, his Government had suffered discredit. He had striven to prevent the union of Italy, and the union of Italy was an accomplished fact. He had desired to protect the supreme head of the Church, and the Pope had been stripped of his richest provinces. The States of the Church had been pillaged under the eyes of a French army charged with their protection. Weakness or bad faith! No other explanation could be given of the policy of the Imperial Government.'[2]

Thus the man who in the middle of 1859 had apparently gathered fresh laurels for his dynasty, at the end of 1860 was discredited in the sight of his own subjects and of all Europe. But the ultimate consequences of the Emperor's Italian policy were even more serious. Both in what the Emperor did, and in what he failed to do, he sowed the seeds of his own ruin. In leaving Venice to Austria, he secured for Prussia the alliance of Italy in the decisive war of 1866.

[1] The phrase is the Duc de Gramont's in *Le Secret de l'Empereur*, vol. i. p. 89.

[2] *Mémoires de Persigny*, p. 277.

In permitting the union of Italy, he gave Germany an example which a German Cavour was certain, sooner or later, to follow.[1]

The share of the British Ministry in the work.

If the Government of France suffered discredit after Villafranca, the Government of this country exerted a decisive influence in the same period. The Court and the Cabinet were not indeed of one mind on Italian policy; but the Court and the Cabinet both had to yield to the public opinion of England, which was represented in the Cabinet by three men, Lord Palmerston, Lord John Russell, and Mr. Gladstone. As Foreign Secretary, Lord John Russell was the mouthpiece of these men. He had succeeded a Minister who had founded his policy on the stipulations of treaties, and who had busied himself to prevent war by promoting what would now be called the concert of Europe. Lord John Russell from the first perceived that there are things even more sacred than treaties, and that the Minister who labours for the concert of Europe spends his time in elaborating a machine which can rarely be made to move. From the first to the last, he iterated and reiterated the same advice: Italy for the Italians. Let the Italians settle their fate themselves.[2] From the first to the last, he held this language in opposition to the views of every great continental power; and, in carrying out this policy, he showed a cynical indifference to the traditions of diplomacy. Thus, for example, when the Austrian Ambassador called on him to denounce 'the invasion of the Papal States by the Sardinian army,' Lord John Russell coolly told him that he took a totally different view of that proceeding: the last hope for Italy lay in the success of the King of Sardinia.[3] When the Emperor

[1] Count Cavour 'turned off the furious remonstrances, which came like the burden of a song from Berlin, with the polite remark that the Prussian Government would be soon very glad to follow his example.' Countess Cesaresco's *Cavour*, pp. 201, 202.

[2] Further Correspondence relating to Italy, *Parl. Papers*, Session 1861, vol. lxvii. p. 28.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 74.

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of the French reinforced the garrison at Rome, he took occasion to express his regret that the occupation had not been terminated, and his hope that the French troops would be confined to the city of Rome and its immediate neighbourhood.[1] When Continental Europe stood aghast at the defeat of the King of Naples and of the Papal army, he wrote both to St. Petersburg and to Berlin: 'The Governments of Naples and of Rome were so tyrannical, so corrupt, so demoralising, so odious to their subjects, that their fall might at any time have been expected. They were Governments under which innocence had no protection, and offences, other than political, incurred little chance of punishment. . . Her Majesty's Government cannot, therefore, share in the regret which is felt in some parts of Europe at the fall of these Governments.'[2] When the Neapolitan Minister in London called upon him to protest against the acts of Garibaldi and the attack of the King of Sardinia, Lord John sent him a memorandum in which he argued that 'no form of treaties, no ancient rights, no armaments by sea and land, can protect the throne of a sovereign whose counsellors rely for safety rather on arbitrary and cruel punishments than on the affections of the people.' And finally, when it appeared that the proceedings of the King of Sardinia were strongly disapproved by several of the principal Courts of Europe, he wrote the famous despatch[3] of which Count Brunnow said, 'Ce n'est pas de la diplomatie, c'est de la polissonnerie,'[4] in which he vindicated revolution in Italy and the intervention of Piedmont on the authority of Vattel. 'That eminent jurist Vattel, discussing the lawfulness of the assistance given by the United Provinces to the Prince of Orange when he invaded England and overturned the throne of James II., says,

[1] *Parl. Papers*, Session 1861, vol. lxvii. p. 82.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 92.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 125.
[4] Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. ii. p. 130, note.

'When a people from good reasons take up arms against an oppressor, it is but an act of justice and generosity to assist brave men in the defence of their liberties." Therefore, according to Vattel, the question resolves itself into this, Did the people of Naples and of the Roman States take up arms against their Governments for good reasons? Upon this grave matter, her Majesty's Government hold that the people in question are themselves the best judges of their own affairs. Her Majesty's Government do not feel justified in declaring that the people of Southern Italy had not good reasons for throwing off their allegiance to their former Governments. Her Majesty's Government cannot, therefore, pretend to blame the King of Sardinia for assisting them.' Words such as these naturally conveyed a dismal warning to autocrats who had Poles or Hungarians, or even unrepresented Republicans and Liberals, among their subjects. The Foreign Minister of England was almost adopting the programme which M. de Lamennais, thirty years before, had unfolded in the 'Avenir,' 'Nous avons applaudi à toutes les révolutions faites, nous applaudissons à toutes les révolutions à faire.'

It was the good fortune of Italy that, in the hour of her need, this country was represented at the Court of Turin by a diplomatist who shared the feelings and the aspirations of the Italians themselves. Sir James Hudson had first acquired distinction as the messenger —the 'hurried Hudson'—who was despatched in 1834 to Rome to summon Sir Robert Peel to London and to power. But he will be recollected far longer for the part which he played in 1859 and 1860. It was the striking remark of Count Cavour that, with the single exception of Sir James Hudson, he had the whole corps diplomatique on his back.[1] Through the anxious

[1] Cesaresco's *Cavour*, p. 190. 'En attendant j'ai ici tout le corps diplomatique sur le dos, Hudson excepté.' Bianchi, *La Politique de Comte Camille de Cavour*, p. 375.

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years which preceded, and the still more anxious months which followed, the campaign of 1859, Italy had no truer friend, Count Cavour had no more sympathetic counsellor, than the British Minister at the Court of Turin; the 'uomo italianissimo,' as the Count himself called him.[1]

The language of the British Ministry was the more significant, because there was no doubt that it reflected the opinion of this country. The Emperor had never carried with him his more reflecting subjects in the war which he had waged for the liberation of Italy; he had excited the opposition of religious France, by allowing the union of Italy to be accomplished; he had roused the anger of military France by suffering it to be completed through the defeat of a French general. The Church and the army were equally opposed to his policy. But, in England, the sympathy which the Court and the Conservative party felt for the cause of defeated potentates was hardly audible amid the universal satisfaction which was everywhere expressed at the formation of a united Italy, and at the share which a British Ministry had taken in its creation. The despatch, which a foreign statesman could describe as 'polissonnerie,' 'Punch,' which frequently reflects opinion more accurately than serious newspapers, approved as 'exactly the thing,' and Lord Palmerston's second Ministry gained strength and reputation from the part which it had taken in the great drama which had been played on the stage of Europe.

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, vol. ii. p. 6.

CHAPTER V.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF A GREAT FINANCE MINISTER.

The political torpor of 1859–65.

THROUGHOUT the last Administration of Lord Palmerston, a continuous torpor pervaded the political atmosphere on all organic questions. The country for the time seemed to share the dislike, which the Prime Minister hardly attempted to conceal, of any project of parliamentary reform. The inequalities and inconsistencies of the representative system, and the fact that the great masses of the people were not represented at all, were accepted as so many proofs of the wisdom of a Constitution which had been built up by the labours of many successive generations. Many influential people regarded the House of Commons, as Dr. Pangloss regarded society, as the best of all possible assemblies in the best of all possible governments.

But, if on organic questions the Conservative party approved, and the Liberal party acquiesced in, the policy of repose which the Prime Minister favoured, on other subjects the political atmosphere was disturbed by storms which were felt even in the Cabinet. Lord Palmerston succeeded to office at a moment when the mind of the public was excited by the rumours of preparations in France, which were supposed to be directed against this country; and the earlier months of his Administration were remarkable for the efforts of one set of men to make war dangerous to the Emperor by increasing the strength of our armaments, and for the

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exertions of another set of men to make war unlikely by strengthening the bonds with which commerce was linking the two countries.

The fear of French invasion.

The history of the panics—the panics of French invasion—which agitated this country between 1848 and 1860 has been traced by Mr. Cobden in a pamphlet, which is perhaps the best model of that type of literature in the language. The panics of 1848 and 1853, indeed, were only transient symptoms of popular uneasiness. The panic which had its origin in 1848 was terminated by Lord John Russell's proposal to increase the income tax to a shilling. The panic which had its origin in 1853 disappeared with the outbreak of the Crimean War. Revived, however, after the peace, it was destined to a longer existence, and to leave more enduring marks on the finances and institutions of the British people.

Primarily the cause of the panic was the presence of the Emperor on the throne of France. His Empire was a visible proof that the arrangements of 1815 had been torn up, and that the history which Waterloo was supposed to have closed had been reopened. For the great war, in its concluding episode at any rate, had been less a war against France than a war against a dynasty; and the recognition of Louis Napoleon as Emperor was just as much an acknowledgment that Europe had abandoned the cause for which she had fought in 1814 and 1815, as the modification in 1870 of the treaties of 1856 was an acknowledgment that the Western powers had abandoned the cause—the neutrality of the Black Sea—for which in 1855 they had prolonged the Crimean War.

The position of Napoleon III.

It is true that, during the twenty-two years in which he occupied the first place in France, Napoleon III. proved a warm friend to this country; and that, in 1857, he rendered it a signal service by allowing the troops

sent to restore our authority in India to pass through French territory; but no evidence of friendship was strong enough to eradicate the feeling that the heir to the First Napoleon had not only a cause to promote, but also a defeat to avenge. The few people, indeed, who believed that the Emperor was too wise to embark on a struggle with a power like England, which could only be approached by sea, where France was least strong, declared that the necessities of his position would sooner or later drive him into hostilities. 'The only way,' so spoke a peer who resided in France, and whose 'social relations were chiefly in that country,'[1] 'the only way to unite together all parties in France—Republicans, Imperialists, Orleanists, and Legitimists—would be to enter into a war with this country. Such a war was the only one which would ever be universally popular in France; and however reckless the attempt to invade England might be—however devoid of all rational hope of success—there was not a single widow in France who would not give her last son, or a single beggar who would not give his last penny, to carry out such a project.'[2]

The apprehensions of war.

The language which was held in France, after Orsini's attempt on the French Emperor's life, strengthened this feeling. The foolish threats of the French colonels were thought to prove that the army, to which Napoleon III. owed so much, was in favour of war with England; and, in August 1858, Lord Derby received a letter from our Minister at Paris, in which Lord Cowley declared that 'even men so friendly to us as Canrobert talk of the impossibility of preserving peace.'[3] But, in 1859, the

[1] Lord Howden, *Hansard*, vol. cliv. p. 518.

[2] M. Ollivier says, I am afraid justly, 'Par malheur les Anglais accueillent si aisément les suppositions les plus saugrenues sur les peuples étrangers et surtout sur nous, qu'à moins d'un engagement synallagmatique formel, on n'est jamais en sécurité complète avec aucun de leurs ministères.' *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. p. 210.

[3] The words are taken from the private letter, in my possession, of

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fears of war became much more intense. Mr. Sidney Herbert, who held the seals of the War Office, and whose lineage and expectations, character and ability, presence and manners, combined to increase his influence, convinced himself that war was inevitable, and that everything had been determined on except the time and occasion.[1] Lord Palmerston adopted the views and shared the fears of his colleague; and the 'Times' supported the growing apprehension by continually declaring that the French Emperor was awaiting an opportunity to invade us.[2] In the following spring the annexation of Savoy and Nice increased the distrust which was everywhere felt in the Emperor. It was thought that his policy of rounding off his Empire in the south-east would be followed by greater annexations in the north. Well-informed diplomatists declared that Belgium was the next morsel which France was to swallow. They even asserted that Napoleon III. had been heard to say that, 'if the Belgians were bent on becoming French, he could not help it.'[3]

The defects of military administration.

When statesmen and diplomatists were feeling or expressing these apprehensions, the people could perhaps be forgiven for sharing their alarm; and the people, to do them justice, had some cause for panic in the knowledge of our own administrative deficiencies. The Crimean War had shown, what the Duke of Wellington's letter to Sir John Burgoyne had indicated, that the army and navy were ill organised for a great struggle. The Indian Mutiny had denuded the country of troops and arms; and in the summer of 1859 it was admitted that there were only 170,000 rifles in store, including

an exalted member of the Cabinet.

[1] Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii. p. 43. According to Sir Robert Phillimore (whose private diary has been opened to me through the courtesy of Mr. Justice Phillimore), Mr. Sidney Herbert said that he could mention the exact day of the French invasion.

[2] Sir R. Phillimore's diary of the 18th of November, 1859.

[3] Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. ii. p. 83.

those which were reserved for arming the disembodied militia.[1] It is, no doubt, a matter for argument how far it is desirable to tax a nation in time of peace for the purpose of making the fullest provision against possible hostilities; for, if there be truth in the old Latin maxim, 'Si vis pacem, para bellum,' there is still more truth in the modern contention that the sinews of war are money, and that the resources of a nation, if they are to be available in war, should be husbanded in peace. But probably most people will think that military preparations had been subjected to some neglect, and that the country in 1858 and 1859 was not in that position of security which its circumstances required.

Sir Charles Napier.

That conclusion had, at any rate, been pressed on it with unusual persistence by a remarkable man. Sir Charles Napier was a vigorous member of a vigorous family. His career in our own navy had been remarkable for a great achievement and a great failure. In 1840 his bombardment of Acre had set the seal of success on Lord Palmerston's Oriental policy; in 1854, on the contrary, his expedition to the Baltic, which had sailed amid boasting, had returned amid disappointment. Men there were who said that the veteran of 1854 no longer retained the qualities which he had displayed fourteen years before, and that the infirmities of age were unfitting him for high command. Advancing years, however, did not render him unacceptable to a great constituency. He was chosen by the electors of Southwark as their representative, and he availed himself of his position, in season and out of season, to state and restate the same story—that this country was open to attack, and that the activity of France and the neglect of successive Governments had deprived her of the command of the seas.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cliv. p. 690.

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Two facts were constantly urged in the debates which Sir C. Napier raised. There was no doubt that the Emperor, from a desire to raise the influence of France, had done something to improve the condition of the French navy by providing it with a great arsenal. In completing the construction and fortifications of Cherbourg, the Emperor, indeed, had only crowned a work which had been commenced in the eighteenth century, and which had been leisurely prosecuted by succeeding dynasties. But the strength and position of the harbour tended to increase the alarm on this side of the Channel. What need could there be for a great arsenal on the French shore of the Channel, if it were not directed against this country? It was difficult, indeed, to see where any French arsenal could be placed which would not constitute more or less a menace to Great Britain. If it were situated on the Mediterranean, it might be plausibly argued that it threatened the direct road to the East, which it was the vital interest of this country to keep open. If it were placed on the Channel, it was necessarily opposite to our own coasts. But if Englishmen in 1859 could have been induced to look on the policy of other nations from the standpoint from which they regarded their own, they, perhaps, might have seen that the construction of a great arsenal at Cherbourg was no more a menace to England than the fortifications of Portsmouth or Plymouth were a menace to France. The necessities of each country required a fleet for the protection of its interests; and the safety of a fleet demanded some fortified ports to which it could retire.

The fortifications at Cherbourg.

But there was another consideration which disturbed the judgment of the British people in 1859. There was very little doubt that, in guns, in men, and in vessels, this nation still retained its superiority over France; but it so happened that, in one particular class of

The effect of steam on the navy.

vessel, France stood on an equality with ourselves. The experiences of the Crimean War had confirmed the impression, at which the skilled advisers of both nations had slowly arrived, that the old line-of-battle ship, moving by wind, was obsolete, and that steam must be substituted for sails. In consequence, from 1852 to 1859 both countries had been engaged in providing themselves with a steam fleet. In England new vessels had been built: in France old vessels had been converted into screw steamers. The cost of converting such a sailing vessel into such a steamer was as to the cost of building a steamer as one is to four. It followed, therefore, that, with a much smaller expenditure, France, after some six years of labour, could show as many screw line-of-battle ships as England.[1] There was, indeed, much doubt whether the converted screw line-of-battle ship was not already as obsolete as the old sailing three-decker. The Admiralty of late years had been so much impressed with this doubt, that it had devoted its chief energies to the construction of small gunboats instead of large vessels. This fact, however, was deliberately ignored by the alarmists. By confining the comparison which they drew between the fleets of the two countries to the single type of vessel in which both of them were on an equality, they produced an impression of relative weakness which was far from the truth. As was afterwards said by Lord Clarence Paget: they told the truth and nothing but the truth; but they did not tell the whole truth.[2]

The alarmists of 1859.

It is usually the younger members of a community who are chiefly influenced by the patriotism for which a later generation has invented the new word 'Jingoism;' but it was the striking characteristic of the panic of 1859 that it was mainly due

[1] Cobden's *Political Writings*, vol. ii. p. 304.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. cliii. p. 46.

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to the counsels of the old. The two men in the Lords who called for the most drastic remedies were Lord Ellenborough and Lord Lyndhurst, statesmen who had grown up to maturity amid the storm and stress of the great contest with Napoleon. The two men who were, perhaps, most directly responsible for it in the Commons were Sir Charles Napier, who had already survived the normal age of man, and Lord Palmerston, who had entered the service of the Crown half a century before. The attitude of Lord Palmerston, indeed, was the more surprising, because he had originally displayed no jealousy of the Third Napoleon. He it was who, in defiance of his Sovereign and his colleagues, had approved the atrocious act by which Naploeon had secured his power; he it was who had driven the divided Cabinet of Lord Aberdeen into vigorous concert with France; he it was who sympathised most warmly with Napoleon's Italian policy, and regretted most keenly that it should have been interrupted at Villafranca; yet he it was who, influenced by the annexation of Savoy and Nice, thenceforward replaced his confidence in Napoleon with a feeling of distrust, and brought himself to believe that the Emperor was reverting to his original intention of avenging Waterloo.[1]

The British people, indeed, had hitherto believed that their insular position gave them comparative security from attack. The Channel, which Cromwell called a great ditch, which the trimmer Lord Halifax called a moat, and which one of Lord Palmerston's own colleagues was to name a 'streak of silver sea,'[2] was popularly

[1] 'Till lately I had strong confidence in the fair intentions of Napoleon towards England, but of late I have begun to feel great distrust, and to suspect that his formerly declared intention of avenging Waterloo has only lain dormant and has not died away.' *Life of Palmerston*, vol. v. p. 187. Lord Lyndhurst's motion on the national defences is in *Hansard*, vol. cliv. p. 616; Lord Ellenborough's speech, *ibid.*, p. 643.

[2] 'You have accounted yourself

supposed to be an adequate defence against sudden attack. But Lord Palmerston himself had done much to destroy this sense of security. He had invented the notion that steam had bridged the Channel, and that this country had in consequence almost ceased to be an island. It mattered little that this opinion was opposed to the views of many officers of experience, and that it could with difficulty be supported by argument; for an epigram commonly survives when the chain of reasoning is snapped or forgotten. Men might argue to the crack of doom that steam must necessarily enable a protecting fleet to concentrate itself against an attacking force, and that the advantage which it thus afforded was increased when the power on the defensive was strong, and the power on the offensive was weak, in iron and coal. Lord Palmerston's epigram clung to the memory, and influenced the judgment, of the people.[1] The people, it is fair to say, were not slow to adopt the suspicions of their leaders. They showed their distrust of the French Emperor; they believed that it was his ambition to humiliate one after another the powers which had defeated his uncle; and that, as Russia and Austria had already felt the weight of his arm, the turn of this country would come next. They were ready to approve any measures which statesmen might recommend for the national defence; they were ready even to anticipate statesmen by arming themselves.

Steam had bridged the Channel.

The measures which recommended themselves to

happy in being encircled with a great ditch.' *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, vol. v. p. 121. 'To the question, "What shall we do to be saved in this world?" there is no other answer but this, "Look to your moat."' Miss Foxcroft's *Halifax*, vol. ii. p. 455. Mr. Gladstone's 'silver streak,' of course, originally gleamed in the pages of a great review. Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii. p. 345.

[1] For Lord Palmerston's original statement, 'Steam navigation has rendered that which was before impassable by a military force, nothing more than a river passable by a steam bridge,' *Hansard*, vol. lxxxii. p. 1224, cf. vol. clx. p. 18 and vol. clxviii. p. 172, and Cobden's *Political Writings*, vol. ii. p. 371 *seq.*

CHAP. V. 1859-65. The volunteers.

the Government were the increase of our military and naval forces and the fortification of our coasts. But the measure on which the people relied was the voluntary arming of large masses of the population. Rudiments of a volunteer force were already in existence. The Honourable Artillery Company of London traced its history to the days of the Tudors, and cannot, perhaps, be rightly included in our later volunteer movement. But volunteers had been enrolled by the hundred thousand in the old war; the Act which had been passed for their government in 1804 was still on the Statute-book; and one body in Middlesex, originally known as the Duke of Cumberland's sharpshooters, had kept up a continuous existence as a rifle club, and had been permitted, in 1835, to adopt the name of the heiress to the throne. When, therefore, after the outbreak of the war in Italy, the people became earnest in their desire to defend themselves, the machinery was already prepared for the acceptance of their services; and, in May 1859, Lord Derby's Government decided to yield to the popular feeling by encouraging the formation of volunteer corps. The conditions on which the corps were to be formed were, briefly, that their formation should be recommended by the Government, and that it should impose no expense on the country. In accordance with the latter decision the Government refused to supply the new corps with arms, pleading with some force, on the one hand, that it had no arms to spare, but asserting, on the other, through the Secretary of State for War, that 'it desired to have a drilled but not an armed population.'[1] This somewhat lukewarm support of a great national movement tended rather to chill than to encourage the popular enthusiasm;[2] and, when Lord Derby's Government fell, only twelve applications had been registered at the

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cliv. p. 691. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 511.

War Office for the formation of rifle corps. The new Government, however, at once decided to take a fresh step in advance. They determined to provide each corps with a certain proportion of rifles, on condition that the corps had a safe and sufficient rifle range; that it had a secure place in which the arms could be kept; that its rules were approved by the Secretary of State for War; and that it submitted to periodical inspection by a competent military officer.[1]

In announcing this decision, the Government followed a precedent set it by its predecessors, and determined, in the first instance, only to recognise the offers which it received from individual companies. It threw, too, the whole expense of drill on the men themselves. But these decisions were rapidly abandoned. When men came forward, not in their tens, but in their hundreds and in their thousands, the preference for company organisation became impossible. In a few months, indeed, the Government had seen the error of its ways, and was actually grouping detached companies into administrative battalions. In the same way it soon became plain that the force was of too much importance to be left to its own resources. In the course of a comparatively short time it was completely armed; its adjutants, and subsequently its drill instructors, were paid by the nation; and, finally, a grant of 30*s.* was made to each corps for each thoroughly efficient volunteer who belonged to it.[2]

The success of the movement.

The success of the movement far exceeded the expectations of the somewhat doubting statesmen who had watched over its birth. In May 1860, within twelve months of its origin, the Queen reviewed nearly

[1] See Mr. Sidney Herbert's speech, *ibid.*, p. 534, and cf. Lord Ripon's, *ibid.*, p. 512.

[2] For the volunteer force, see, *inter alia*, Sir H. Jenkyns *Manual of Military Law*, pp. 238–245. Mr. Tennyson published his 'Riflemen, Form,' with the signature 'T.,' in the *Times* of the 9th of May, 1859.

CHAP. V. 1859-65. 20,000 volunteers in Hyde Park. In the following August she reviewed another 20,000 volunteers in Edinburgh. In May 1861 it was officially computed that the volunteer army amounted to 160,000 men. In the succeeding years these numbers were fully maintained. The members of the force showed that they had been attracted to it by deeper motives than the excitement of a novel experience, and that they were animated by a *bona-fide* desire to increase the defensive strength of their country.

It ought, perhaps, to be added that the volunteer movement did something to break down the barriers between classes which the conditions of modern life had done much to raise. In the eighteenth century, when England was still chiefly rural England, the squire, the tenant, and the labourer had occasionally been thrown into communication with one another. There did not exist in the greater part of England that complete separation of classes which Mr. Disraeli desired to emphasise when he chose 'The Two Nations' as the second title of his greatest novel. In the nineteenth century, however, when, with the growth of the factory system, and the aggregation of the population in towns, England became more and more urban England, the line of demarcation between classes became more and more apparent, and the gulf between employers and employed more and more impassable. The volunteer movement did, at any rate, something to obliterate the line and to bridge the gulf. The employer stood beside his workman in the ranks or competed with him on the rifle range; and classes, thus casually and occasionally mingled, learned to know and to understand each other better.

The volunteer movement, moreover, presented to foreign nations the spectacle of a people trusted by its Government. There are, perhaps, only few countries

in which the ruling classes could venture to arm the masses of the people with the best military weapons which they could procure. Yet this is exactly the course which was taken in 1859. The people were deliberately converted into a formidable armed force Just as in old feudal England every peasant had been encouraged to practise archery, and the English bowmen had become the most skilful in the world, so in modern England the people were encouraged to practise rifle shooting, and the volunteers became, as a body, superior shots to the men of the regular army. But, while in feudal England the peasant archer was the man of his lord, and bound to serve at his lord's bidding, in nineteenth-century England the volunteer was not compelled to serve at all, except in case of invasion or of threatened invasion, while he could shake off this remote liability by a notice extending over only fourteen days.

In two respects, indeed, the Government refused to trust the people. While in seaport towns they encouraged the formation of garrison artillery, they discouraged in every place the formation of field artillery. The reasons which influenced them in this respect were never disclosed, though they were, perhaps, breathed in whispers to some of their closest advisers. But it is fair to surmise that Lord Palmerston's Government was not prepared in 1859 to endow the people with the entire material of an army. They kept in their own hands that formidable artillery force which, by rapid movements in the field, decides the fate of so many battles, and without which the best appointed infantry is at a disadvantage on any hotly contested field.

While, moreover, they readily accepted the offers which they received from every part of Great Britain, they neither received nor accepted any such offers from Ireland. The old Act of George III., indeed,

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under which the volunteers were enrolled, did not apply to Ireland. The Irish, therefore, in Ireland—for whole corps in Great Britain were composed of Irish—were kept forcibly aloof from the great movement. Few people will feel surprise that the Government should have hesitated to extend to Ireland the Act which enabled them to arm the population of Great Britain; the memories which had been handed down to them from the eighteenth century were perhaps both an explanation and a justification of their refusal. But it is none the less the historian's duty to emphasise the fact that this broad distinction was and is applied to the peoples of the two countries. It is misleading to assert, as the modern statesman is fond of asserting, that they enjoy the same privileges, and are treated in the same manner, when the Government places arms in the hands of the one people, and refuses—probably rightly refuses—arms to the other.[1]

Few people perhaps foresaw, when the movement originated in 1859, that it was destined to survive the century. The volunteers had sprung to arms in a moment of panic: it was reasonable to suppose that they would disarm when the panic, or its cause, was removed. Yet, in the years which have passed since 1859, the volunteers have shown no symptoms of decreasing zeal. They survived a period of flattery which was full of danger to them; they survived a period of criticism which was almost as dangerous; but, both in the time when all men[2] spoke well of them, and in the

[1] In 1863 an Irish member, Mr. Bagwell, formally proposed that this distinction should cease. He was met by the argument that the pugnacious qualities of Irishmen were so exuberant, that, if they were armed, they would fight among themselves. 'We do not wish them,' said Lord Palmerston, 'by way of keeping their hand in, to exercise on each other that admirable quality which ought to be reserved for a better occasion.' *Hansard*, vol. clxxi. p. 339. It would have been far more honest, and probably far more wise, if Lord Palmerston had simply stated that he could not trust the Irish, in Ireland, with arms.

[2] This must not be taken too

time when military men were fond of pointing out that a force which was only imperfectly drilled and imperfectly organised could not take the place of regular troops in the field, they steadily adhered to their duties, and abided their time. Later on they had their reward. For a war, at the conclusion of the century, was destined to prove that intelligence in a soldier is more valuable than drill, and that the volunteers of England are capable of taking part in a distant campaign, and are worthy, both in the camp and in the battle-field, to fight side by side with regular troops.

The volunteer movement was the popular outcome of the panic of 1859. It owed its origin and its endurance to the conviction of the British people that the islands in which they lived were inadequately defended against attack. While the people of England were displaying an admirable example in coming forward to protect their hearths and homes, the statesmen of England were doing something in the same direction. The conduct of the people, however, contrasts favourably with the conduct of their parliamentary leaders; for, while it is difficult to find anything but praise for the spirit which produced, and the perseverance which sustained, the uprising of the volunteers, it is easy to criticise the steps which successive Governments took on the same occasion.

The additions to the navy.

It was almost inevitable that their first efforts should be directed to the improvement of the navy. In the happy days which preceded the Crimean War, the cost of the navy had not reached 7,000,000*l.* a year. It had risen during the war to nearly 20,000,000*l.* Enormous additions had been made to our fleets during the progress of the struggle, and at the close of it, it

literally. Lord Melville, who commanded the forces in Scotland, had the bad taste to declare the volunteers to be useless. *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 158. Sir R. Peel expressed a somewhat similar opinion in the House of Commons. *Ibid.*, p. 1307.

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was the boast of one Prime Minister, which was endorsed by another, that 'no country ever possessed so mighty a naval armament.' In these circumstances the expenditure on the navy was rapidly reduced, till it stood in 1858–59 at a little over 9,000,000*l.*[1] It so happened that both parties in the State were jointly responsible for the estimates of 1858–59; for, prepared under Lord Palmerston's directions, they were introduced by Sir John Pakington, who presided over the Admiralty in Lord Derby's second Ministry. Towards the end of the Session of 1858, indeed, Sir John, in deprecating panic speeches in Parliament and panic articles in the press, declared that, notwithstanding the detention of a large portion of our forces in India and China, 'we could at the shortest notice assemble in the Channel a fleet which would be able to cope with any that any other power of Europe could send out.'[2]

If, then, the famous saying of a famous Chancellor had not reminded the world that wisdom is a rare quality among statesmen, the ordinary British citizen in the concluding months of 1858 might have been justified in thinking that this country was at least as secure against invasion as it had been in almost any previous period of its history. But the ordinary British citizen was not satisfied. He refused to be comforted by amiable country gentlemen like Sir John Pakington. And the people were justified by the event; for in 1859, Sir John Pakington, in moving the estimates, declared that on acceding to office he had not found the navy of this country in 'a proper and adequate state for the defence of our coasts and the protection of our commerce,'[3] and he invited

The navy estimates of 1859.

[1] The figures were: 1852–53, 6,625,944*l.*; 1855–56, 19,654,585*l.*; in 1858–59, 9,215,487*l.* All these figures include the cost of the packet service. Lord Derby's boast was quoted by Lord Palmerston. See *Hansard*, vol. cxlii. p. 226.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. cl. p. 1944.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. cliii. p. 902.

the House to aid him in restoring our naval supremacy by sanctioning the largest naval estimates which had ever been framed in time of peace.[1]

It was obvious that these estimates, if they were necessary, in themselves afforded the severest criticism of the language which Sir John Pakington had held only a few months before. Whatever justification he might have found, in the approaching contest between Austria and France, for an increase in our own forces, he certainly was not justified in declaring in 1858 that we could assemble at the shortest notice in the Channel a fleet able to cope with that of any other power, if it was true that on his accession to office he found the navy inadequate for our defence. But, if his language on one or other occasion is susceptible to censure, his recommendation in 1859 must be equally condemned. For in 1859 experience was already indicating that the old line-of-battle ship, with its formidable batteries rising over each other tier above tier, was an obsolete type which would have to be discarded in the near future. And under Sir John Pakington's advice the Ministry devoted almost all its energies to the conversion of these old vessels into screw steamers and the building of new vessels of a similar type moved by screws.[2] It had, no doubt, in doing so the satisfaction of reflecting that it had redressed the balance in the one point on which the British navy was inferior to that of France. But it could have derived no other satisfaction from its policy; for the events of the American War

Sir John Pakington's policy.

[1] The estimates contemplated an expenditure of 9,813,000*l.* (without the packet service), and a provision of 62,400 men and boys. *Hansard*, vol. cliii. pp. 883, 913.

[2] Sir John Pakington stated that his attention was directed to our 'real inferiority' in battle ships in July 1858, only a month after he had complacently assured the House of Commons that the Channel fleet could cope with that of any other European power. The Government, on his advice, thereupon decided, on their own responsibility, to convert four line-of-battle ships into screws in that year. In 1859–60 it proposed to convert five others, and to build six new line-of-battle ships moved by screws. *Ibid.*, pp. 907, 908.

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were to prove, within only a few months from the time in which Sir J. Pakington spoke, that the old line-of-battle ship was as obsolete as the dodo. After the engagement between the Merrimac and the Monitor, in the spring of 1862, in Hampton Roads, men placed as little reliance on the wooden three-decker as the Psalmist in princes, or the Swedish Chancellor in the wisdom of statesmen.

The navy estimates of 1859, 1860.

Sir J. Pakington, however, did not enjoy a monopoly of unwisdom. His conduct was justified by the action of his successors. The navy estimates of 1859–60 had not been finally voted on the change of Government, and the new Ministry not only accepted the figures of their predecessors, but in some respects enlarged them.[1] But the full policy of the new Government was not seen till the following year. The navy estimates of 1860–61 provided for the maintenance of no less than 85,000 men and boys, an increase of 23,000 over the numbers for which Sir J. Pakington had asked, and a larger force than had been voted in the height of the Crimean War.[2] They involved an expenditure of 12,802,000*l.* on the navy alone.[3]

In the discussions, which had thus taken place on the strength of the navy, there was to a certain extent a universal agreement. There was not much distinction in principle between Mr. Cobden (who declared that if he saw a disposition on the part of France to have as large a navy as England, he would 'cheerfully vote 100,000,000*l.*' to enlarge our own) and Lord Palmerston,

[1] *Hansard.*, vol. cliv. p. 900. It is, perhaps, a fair indication of what was done, that it added 10,000 men and boys to the large force which Sir J. Pakington had provided. *Ibid.*, pp. 907, 916.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. clvi. pp. 962, 969, 984.

[3] From 1859–60 the large expenditure on the packet service, which up to that time had been included in the navy estimates, was transferred to the civil expenditure of the country. See the accounts in the *Important Returns of Public Income and Expenditure* from 1689 to 1869, and cf. Ap. ii. pp. 127, 129.

who apparently concurred with Sir Charles Napier in thinking that the navy of England ought to be equal to the navies of France and Russia united.[1] The true difference between the men who fanned and the men who allayed the panic of 1859 was not one of principle but of fact. And, unfortunately, when the facts are reviewed in the calm atmosphere of a later period, it will probably be conceded that they were on the side of the thinkers, who deprecated alarm, and not of the Minister, who increased the estimates.

The fortification of the coasts.

The increase in the naval estimates, it should be remembered, represented only a portion of the Bill thrown on the taxpayer. The panic which had led to a large addition to our fleet had drawn attention to the defenceless condition of our coasts. There was no doubt that our principal dockyards were unprotected by any considerable fortifications, and that, if it were possible to assume that our Channel fleet could be so completely defeated that it would be unable to keep the sea, they were exposed to attack. Lord Palmerston, indeed, went much farther. He persuaded himself that the dockyards might be attacked even if we did not lose the command of the sea, and that 20,000 men might be simultaneously landed at Portsmouth, at Plymouth, and in Ireland.[2] Few men of sense accepted Lord Palmerston's conclusion, but most men of sense were agreed that some suitable provision should be made for the fortification of dockyards and harbours of vital importance. There were, indeed, reasons for proceeding with caution even in this matter; for, in the first place, the change which was taking place in arms of offence was so remarkable that it was by no means clear that fortifications designed for the necessities of

[1] For Mr. Cobden, *Hansard*, vol. clv. p. 715; for Lord Palmerston, *ibid.*, p. 684.

[2] See his very curious letter to Mr. Gladstone in *Life of Palmerston*, vol. v. p. 168.

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the day would be adequate for the requirements of the morrow; and, in the next place, the experience of the Crimean War had abundantly proved that earthworks hastily constructed on the eve of an attack were more powerful defences than the masonry forts which in 1860 were still in fashion.

Something had already been done in the matter. Sums of money had been voted in the army estimates year after year for the construction of forts at the chief dockyards; but the sums so voted, though large in the aggregate, were too small to admit of the rapid completion of the works in progress; and, in the state of panic which prevailed, it was poor consolation to the public to know that the forts already under construction might be completed in four, six, or twelve years' time.[1] In the Session of 1859 the Government decided to refer the consideration of the works in progress to a commission composed of civilians, military and naval officers;[2] and though they refused to accept a recommendation which was pressed on them to remove the cost of these fortifications out of the estimates, and to charge them to a special fund, they undertook, so soon as they received the report of the commission, to give it their earliest consideration.[3]

Such inquiries as the Government were instituting necessarily occupied time. Even Lord Palmerston had to restrain his impatience, and wait for the report which he had himself called for. But, if delay was inevitable, the reasons for the new policy strengthened as 1859 ebbed away and the opening months of 1860 succeeded. For the annexation of Savoy and Nice by France, and the terms in which Lord Palmerston and some of his colleagues chose to speak of it, made the maintenance of peace more difficult, and at any rate

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clvi. pp. 680, 681, and *ibid.*, p. 695.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 406.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 692, 728.

fanned the panic which was spreading like a fire through the nation.

Mr. Gladstone's objections.

If Lord Palmerston on his part was resolute in forcing forward the new policy of fortifying the coasts, one important member of his Cabinet held a different opinion. Mr. Gladstone naturally examined the project with the eye of a statesman charged with the custody of the national finances; and in so regarding it he could not have failed to see grave objections to Lord Palmerston's proposal; for Lord Palmerston was not merely anxious to build large forts, but he was equally desirous to defer paying for them. He did not wish to run the risk of destroying the panic of invasion by creating a panic of fresh taxation. Mr. Gladstone, on the contrary, thought that the expenditure of each year should be paid for in the year in which it was incurred, and that a departure from this plain rule offended against all the principles of sound finance. His just objections were overruled by Lord Palmerston's impetuosity. In the closing days of 1859, Lord Palmerston addressed a letter to him which practically left him no option but to accept the policy or to resign his office;[1] and with an amazing flippancy which might, perhaps, have been excusable in youth, but was unpardonable in age, the Prime Minister told the Queen that 'it would be better to lose Mr. Gladstone than to run the risk of losing Portsmouth or Plymouth.'[2]

At the opening of the Session, it seemed probable that the difference between the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer would inevitably lead to Mr. Gladstone's withdrawal from the Ministry. He said himself, 'My mind is made up, and to propose any loan for fortifications would be on my part, with the views I entertain, a betrayal of public duty.'[3] And there

[1] *Life of Palmerston*, vol. v. p. 168.
[2] Russell's *Gladstone*, p. 147.
[3] Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii. p. 44.

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seems very little doubt that, if Lord Palmerston had been in a position to bring forward his plans at the beginning of the Session, Mr. Gladstone would have retired from the Government, and would probably have been compelled to resume the position of uncertainty which had made him from 1855 to 1859 hesitate between the traditions in which he had been brought up and the Liberal convictions of his later years. Happily, however, for the Cabinet, and for Mr. Gladstone himself, Lord Palmerston was under the necessity of waiting for the report of the Royal Commission, which he had himself appointed in 1859. Before the report was made, other issues of still greater importance were occupying Mr. Gladstone's attention, and his colleagues were consequently enabled to arrange a compromise, which Lord Palmerston could accept, and which the Chancellor of the Exchequer consented to adopt.[1] Under this compromise Lord Palmerston obtained a loan for the cost of the fortifications, which it was decided to construct in the existing financial year; and the manner in which provision should be made for similar expenditure in later years was left for future decision.

Lord Palmerston's proposal.

Thus, in July 1860, Lord Palmerston was enabled to bring forward his scheme without parting from his brilliant colleague. In doing so he told the House that the commissioners had recommended an expenditure of 11,000,000*l.* on works of defence; that some 1,500,000*l.* of this amount would be devoted to armaments for which provision would be made in the ordinary way in the estimates of the year; that it would only be possible to spend 2,000,000*l.* of the remaining 9,000,000*l.* or 10,000,000*l.* in the existing financial year; and that this 2,000,000*l.* would be raised by a loan terminable in thirty years. This declaration made Lord Palmerston's

[1] The compromise was arranged by the Duke of Somerset, the First Lord of the Admiralty. Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii. p. 46.

amazing statement to the Queen even more amazing than it originally seemed; for it was obvious that he had risked the loss of his colleague's services on the comparatively insignificant point whether a sum of 2,000,000*l.* should be provided out of taxation at once, or spread over the lifetime of a generation.

The differences which existed in the Cabinet made their mark on the House. Mr. Gladstone absented himself from the debate in which Lord Palmerston brought forward his plan, and Mr. Disraeli, with characteristic cynicism, drew attention to his rival's absence, and professed his anxiety to hear Mr. Gladstone's opinion on the proposal.[1] Lord Palmerston's scheme, too, was subjected to a good deal of criticism. Some there were who condemned it as inadequate, and suggested that, in addition to the works which the Government was contemplating, London should be encircled by a vast chain of earthworks, or that the entire coast should be defended by heavy guns placed 30 yards from each other. The newspapers teemed with impracticable and extravagant suggestions of this character.[2] Other men contented themselves with insisting that, 'as the main defence of Great Britain against aggression depends on an efficient navy, it is not now expedient to enter into a large expenditure on permanent land fortifications.'[3] Others, again, contended that the whole proposal was based on misconception; that, so far from any necessity existing for the adoption of special precautions against French aggression, the Emperor Napoleon was incurring unpopularity at home for the sake of linking the United Kingdom and France more closely together by a fresh commercial bond. Lord Palmerston, indeed, had insisted, in

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clx. p. 48.

[2] See Mr. Bright's criticism of some of these schemes, *ibid.*, pp. 510, 514.

[3] Mr. Lindsay proposed an amendment to Lord Palmerston's motion in these words. *Ibid.*, p. 485.

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bringing forward his project, that warlike nations could not be expected to change their habits, or 'at once to comprehend all the benefits and advantages that arise from peaceful and commercial relations.'[1] But this declaration was, in itself, a grave error; for it is the business of the statesman to appease and not to excite the panic of the public.

The scheme adopted.

None of these contrary views received much support. The proposal of the Government, which in one sense was a compromise between the views of the extreme men on either side, made rapid progress, and the motion of Lord Palmerston and the Bill which was introduced to give effect to it were adopted by large majorities.[2] Yet the expenditure, which was thus hurriedly sanctioned, was regretted almost as soon as it was approved. Early in 1862, after the action between the Merrimac and the Monitor, the House of Commons actually passed a motion pledging itself to consider how far it could apply the money, intended to be spent on forts, on the construction of iron-sheathed vessels;[3] and the Government had to promise to reconsider the whole subject.[4] The scheme itself was modified over and over again. In 1864, Lord Palmerston admitted that 'he rather thought that they had abandoned the Sturbridge Fort at Spithead;'[5] and in 1865 a military man, Colonel Dickson, declared that 'the extraordinary expenditure for fortifications had made us the laughing-stock of the whole world.'[6]

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clx. p. 22.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 578, 992, 1237.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. clxvi. pp. 263, 630.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 836.
[5] *Ibid.*, vol. clxxiv. p. 1502.
[6] *Ibid.*, vol. clxxviii. p. 254. In 1860 the Government might have found reason for caution in the history of Alderney. In 1848 Parliament had decided to make a harbour at Alderney at the cost of 620,000*l.* In 1850 the plan was amended, and the cost increased to 880,000*l.* In 1854 the plan was extended, and the cost raised to 1,350,000*l.* In 1857 a further extension raised the cost to 1,850,000*l.*, and this huge sum was increased in 1858 to 2,000,000*l.* *Ibid.*, vol. clxiv. p. 321. These facts could have been ascertained by any member of the House of Commons in 1860. It is melancholy to add that the works, on which these prodigious

This rapid change of opinion did not, indeed, prove that the policy was wrong. On the contrary, the example of almost every great nation may be quoted to prove that there are certain harbours or dockyards of national importance which it may be right to fortify. The mistake which Lord Palmerston made in 1860 was that he committed himself, in the hurry of panic, to proposals which should have been adopted gradually and after calm deliberation. It was his misfortune that the mistake was made at a peculiarly unfortunate time; for, in 1860, the whole question of offensive and defensive warfare was in a state of uncertainty. The relative merits of earth, of iron, and of brick as the material for forts was still undecided. The capacity and range of heavy guns were being increased by fresh inventions; it was certain that the forts which might be adequate on the day on which they were made would be inadequate on the morrow, and that the precautions which Lord Palmerston was insisting on taking in 1860 would prove useless in a dozen years.

The Suez Canal.

It would, perhaps, have been well both for Lord Palmerston's reputation and for the interests of his country if his growing distrust of the Emperor of the French had led him into no worse error than the extravagance of expending millions of money on fortifications which were to become obsolete in a dozen years; but, unfortunately, Lord Palmerston's suspicions induced him to oppose almost every project on which the Emperor was intent. At the time at which Lord Palmerston formed his second Ministry, the scheme for cutting a canal through the isthmus of Suez, which had been devised by a great French engineer, and which had been supported by the Emperor Napoleon, was

sums were lavished, were ultimately abandoned. The tourist who visits Alderney to-day may perhaps be lost in amazement at the folly which designed, which sanctioned, and which persisted in them.

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becoming a concrete fact; and Lord Palmerston had always regarded with dislike what a great newspaper was pleased to call 'the suspicious project of the impracticable Suez Canal.' [1]

Some day, perhaps, when the records of the nineteenth century are finally examined, judgment will be given that no single work devised and completed in it can be compared, in importance, with the Suez Canal. When that day comes, it will probably be universally conceded that no other country derived so much advantage from its construction as the United Kingdom. In that day, also, it may perhaps be recollected that the world owed this great work to the energy of a French engineer and to the goodwill of the French Emperor, while the Prime Minister of this country threw every obstacle in the way of its completion. In 1858, Lord Palmerston had declared that the scheme, as a commercial enterprise, was 'a mere bubble.' Its obvious purpose, he added, was 'the barring of the passage along the coast of the Mediterranean to any Turkish army which might be employed to restore the empire of the Sultan, by opening a great military canal 300 feet broad and 30 feet deep, laid with batteries.' [2] Years before, the inhabitants of Cnidia had been deterred from prosecuting a cutting through the narrow isthmus which divides the Bay of Cos from the Gulf of Syme by the utterance of the Delphic oracle:

> Fence not the isthmus off, nor dig it through;
> Jove would have made an island, had he wished.[3]

Lord Palmerston in the nineteenth century had about as much reason for his opinion as the Delphic oracle for its utterance more than 2,000 years before.

[1] *Times*, 31st of December, 1859.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. cl. pp. 1380, 1383.

[3] *Herodotus*, bk. i. ch. 174. The translation in the text is taken from Rawlinson.

'It is perhaps due to Lord Palmerston's memory to point out that he was not alone in forming these extraordinary delusions. In the same year in which he gave utterance to the foregoing statement, Mr. Disraeli, speaking with the deliberation of a leader of the House of Commons, said 'his own opinion was that the project of executing a canal across the isthmus of Suez was a most futile idea, totally impossible to be carried out. It would be attended with a lavish expenditure of money for which there would be no return; even if successfully carried out in the first instance, the operation of nature would in a short time defeat the ingenuity of man.'[1] Happily M. Lesseps was not disconcerted by the dicta of these eminent statesmen. He addressed himself to his allotted task, and, in 1859, had the satisfaction of seeing the commencement of the work.

The construction of the canal required two things, skill and money: the first M. Lesseps had at his command; the second was not so easily obtainable. The financiers of the world not unnaturally hesitated to support an undertaking which was denounced by one great statesman as futile and by another as a bubble; and the whole scheme seemed likely to perish from the unfriendly criticism of English Ministers.

The Khedive's shares.

Happily this catastrophe was averted by the action of the Khedive—or, to use his then title, the Viceroy—of Egypt. History will have little good to record of this extravagant prince, who brought Egypt to the verge of ruin by defective administration and lavish expenditure; but at least it may say for him that, when Lord Palmerston and Mr. Disraeli were hostile, he had the courage and public spirit to support a great commercial enterprise. He enabled the Suez

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. p. 849.

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Canal Company to be formed by taking up shares to the amount of 95,000,000 francs. In order to procure funds for doing so, he mortgaged his private property in Egypt to a financial house in France. These circumstances gave Lord Palmerston one more opportunity for displaying his opposition to a great commercial project. 'The company,' so he saw fit to affirm, 'is one of the greatest and most remarkable attempts at delusion that has been practised in modern times. . . . The progress of the works has been such as to show that, if not impracticable, it will require an expenditure of money, time, and labour quite beyond the reach of any private company.' Having thus done his best to injure the project by denouncing it as impracticable, he had the bad taste to attack the engineer whose perseverance was rendering so great a service to the world and to this country. 'M. Lesseps found that a house at Trieste had repudiated a large number of shares which they had been induced to take, and he then thought that the Pasha of Egypt was a good person upon whom to fix the responsibility of accepting them. He accordingly induced the unfortunate Pasha to take 64,000 shares, amounting to about 32,000,000 francs. M. Lesseps afterwards wished him to take a larger number of shares, but the unfortunate Pasha, who had been once hoodwinked, had now his eyes open. He refused to accept any more. M. Lesseps, however, wishing in his benevolence to do the Pasha a service which the Pasha himself was not sensible of, without the consent of the Pasha placed to his credit a large additional number of shares. . . . When the Pasha is called on for his money, I can only hope for his own sake that it will not be forthcoming.'[1]

Perhaps, if Englishmen will read carefully this language, will endeavour to appreciate its insinuations,

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clx. p. 1724.

and will recollect the nature of the enterprise which the Prime Minister of England was trying to destroy, they will understand why Lord Palmerston was as unpopular in France as he was popular in England. Perhaps, too, they will meditate on the ignorance which characterises the utterances of public men; for, old as Lord Palmerston was in 1860, he lived to see the partial opening of the canal which he had declared to be a bubble and impracticable; and, astute as Mr. Disraeli was, he lived to purchase the shares in the canal which he had ridiculed as a futile idea. Some of his admirers are unkind enough, indeed, to say that these shares are almost the only things that remain to remind us[1] of the achievements which his friends admire and his foes condemn.

Such, then, in the early months of Lord Palmerston's Administration, was the state of the relations between France and England. Though French and English soldiers were fighting side by side in China, as they had fought five years before side by side in the Crimea, the people of the two countries were steadily drifting apart. The Prime Minister of England was openly avowing his distrust of France, and showing his distrust by increasing our fleet and fortifying our coasts. He was displaying at the same time a jealousy of French enterprise and a suspicion of French methods which were inducing him to denounce the greatest commercial project of the day as a bubble, and the greatest Frenchman alive as a knave. And Lord Palmerston's language was more deplorable because, at the same time, some of the wisest men in both countries were striving to promote a very different policy by linking the two peoples with a new commercial bond.

The commercial treaty of 1860.

[1] Mr. Froude says, 'Of all those great achievements, there remain only to the nation the Suez Canal shares and the possession of Cyprus, and to the Queen the gaudy title of Empress of India.' Froude's *Beaconsfield*, p. 261.

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The credit of originating this idea attaches to a Frenchman, M. Michel Chevalier, who in his youth had been the ardent follower of Saint-Simon, and who in his age was destined to be the apostle of free trade in France. It so happened that, in the summer of 1859, M. Chevalier attended a scientific congress at Bradford, and that he had the advantage of meeting at it many British free-traders, and, among others, Mr. Cobden. He found that Mr. Cobden was intending to pay a private visit to Paris in the succeeding autumn, and he persuaded him to seize the opportunity of waiting upon the Emperor and of endeavouring to convert him to the principles of free trade. Mr. Cobden, before actually assenting to the proposal, had an interview with Mr. Gladstone at Hawarden, and still later in the autumn with Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell. From Mr. Gladstone he received the encouragement which that great statesman was always ready to afford to every scheme for promoting the trade and peace of the world; from the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary, on the contrary, he received a reluctant permission to proceed on an unofficial visit.[1]

Free trade was no new subject for the Emperor. From 1852 he had occupied himself more or less timidly with the revision of the French tariff, and in 1856 he had openly avowed to Lord Clarendon his intention to advance the principles of free trade. Immediately afterwards he had actually submitted a scheme for this purpose to his Legislature. But the French deputies, nursed in traditions of protection which had endured for centuries, and some of them personally interested in industries which they fancied were dependent on its maintenance, received the proposal with

[1] *Life of Cobden*, vol. ii. pp. 237–243; Morley's *Gladstone*, vol. ii. p. 20; De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. pp. 213–218.

chilling disfavour. The Emperor found it necessary not only to withdraw his scheme, but to promise that it should not be brought forward again during the next five years.[1]

Mr. Cobden and the Emperor Napoleon.

Thus Mr. Cobden had an initial difficulty to overcome at Paris: he had to persuade the Emperor that it was safe to renew in 1860 a project on which he had sustained an awkward check in 1856. But Mr. Cobden brought to the task a rare capacity of persuasion; for, of all the men who have advocated the doctrine of free trade, no one, with the possible exception of Adam Smith, has put the disadvantages of protection so clearly before an uninstructed audience. The enchantment, which he had thrown over Parliament and the country in the forties, he threw over the Emperor in 1859–60. Freer trade, he argued, would ameliorate the hard lot of millions of French peasants, and freer trade was the only possible means of counteracting the mischief which greater armaments were creating on either side of the Channel. The Emperor, to his credit, was sensibly touched by the notion of improving the condition of his people, and, equally to his credit, he showed himself ready to risk much for the sake of improving the strained relations between this country and his own.

It was characteristic of the Emperor that, in this

[1] De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. pp. 216, 217, and *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 285. Sir T. Martin says, *Life of Prince Consort*, vol. iv. p. 470, that in a conversation with Lord John Russell, on the 20th of July, 1859, Count Persigny had expressed a wish for a commercial treaty; but I think there must be some confusion here, for Lord John himself on the 21st of July—i.e. on the following day—in noticing a suggestion of Mr. Bright's that the tariffs of both countries should be reduced, declared that he would be loath to enter into any correspondence with France on the subject, which might give French protectionists an opportunity for declaring that the Emperor had been bargaining away their industry and the fruits of their toil in order to obtain some advantage for England. *Hansard*, vol. clv. pp. 205, 206. Lord John could have hardly used this argument if M. Persigny had himself proposed such a bargain the day before.

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strange unofficial negotiation, he confided in only a few of his Ministers. M. Rouher, the Minister of Commerce, M. Fould, the Minister of State, and M. Baroche, who held temporarily the portfolio of foreign affairs, were the select few who were acquainted with the Emperor's intention. M. Magne, the Minister of Finance, who was also admitted to his master's confidence, did his best to oppose the project. But the Emperor himself conducted the negotiations; the whole thing turned, so far as France was concerned, on his own decision.

The secret was so well kept that, at the beginning of the new year, no whisper of what was going on had reached the ears of the public. In the early days of January, however, a paragraph in the 'Morning Post' announced that a treaty of commerce was about to be concluded between France and England. Three days later the 'Constitutionnel,' which was supposed to be the organ of the Emperor, and which hitherto had been the advocate of protection, startled its readers by explaining the advantages of free trade.[1] Finally, on the 15th of January, the 'Moniteur' published a letter from the Emperor to M. Fould, in which his Majesty revealed his new policy.[2] Free trade, or moderate tariffs, and reciprocity, based on treaties of commerce, were to replace the old protective system which had endured since the age of Colbert.

The terms of the treaty.

In fact, the arguments of Mr. Cobden had converted both the Emperor himself and some of his advisers; while his success had induced Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell to appreciate the importance of the unofficial mission which they had recognised so coldly. Lord Cowley was now instructed to assist Mr. Cobden with his influence and his experience;[3] and the loyal

[1] Cf. De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 219, and cf. Morley's *Cobden*, vol. ii. pp. 252, 258, 260.

[2] The letter—or a translation of it—will be found in the *Times* of the 16th of January, 1860.

[3] The despatch of Lord John

co-operation of the diplomatist who represented official England and of the free-trader who represented commercial England had resulted in the preparation of a treaty. Under this treaty the French Emperor undertook to reduce, from various dates in 1860, the duties on coal, iron, machinery, yarn, and hemp; and, from the 1st of October, 1861, when the pledge of 1856 expired, to reduce the duties on, or to abolish the prohibitions of, all articles of British production and manufacture.[1] In return for these concessions, the British Government undertook to sweep away all duties upon all goods manufactured in France; to reduce the duty on brandy from 15*s.* to 8*s.* 2*d.* a gallon—the rate of duty charged on colonial spirits; to lower the duty on wine from 5*s.* 10*d.* to 3*s.* per gallon, and, from the 1st of April, 1861, to 3*s.*, 2*s.* 6*d.*, and 1*s.* per gallon, the precise rate being determined in each case by the alcoholic strength of the wine. Both countries undertook, by a separate article, not to prohibit the exportation of coal.

The attitude of France.

The news that the treaty was contemplated produced a ferment both in France and this country. So far as France was concerned, its conclusion followed almost immediately on the publication of the famous tract, 'Le Pape et le Congrès.' The Emperor—so his detractors alleged—seemed disposed to break, in the same month, both from Catholic and manufacturing France. A large number of persons, interested in French manufactures, came to Paris with the object of laying their protests before the Throne. They failed to obtain an audience from their Sovereign; but they

Russell appointing Lord Cowley and Mr. Cobden jointly plenipotentiaries to negotiate the treaty is dated 17th of January, 1860. *Parl. Papers*, 1860, vol. lxviii. pp. 491–508.

[1] According to the actual terms of the treaty, the French Government undertook to reduce the duties and relax the prohibitions on articles in a certain list; but the list was so comprehensive that the effect was as stated in the text. *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 833. The treaty itself is printed in *State Papers*, vol. l. p. 13 *seq.*

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unfolded their complaints, and their objections, in the French press. Why should the Government—so they asked—consent to bind itself for a long period of years to Great Britain? Why should it expose France to the hard alternative of submitting to stipulations disastrous to its industry, or of resorting to war to get rid of them? The clamour was so loud, the objections were so general, that Mr. Cobden himself admitted that 'it would be hardly possible to assemble 500 persons [in Paris] by any process of selection, and not find nine-tenths of them at least' opposed to the treaty.[1]

The feeling of England.

In England, on the contrary, the news of the treaty was, in the first instance, received with acclamation. The 'Times,' in publishing the Emperor's letter to M. Fould, added the comment, 'Here [is] an idea worth fighting for.'[2] The tone of the English press reflected the opinion of the 'Times,' while in the manufacturing north the news was received with 'an exultant excitement, which had never been equalled since the day when Sir Robert Peel announced that he was about to repeal the corn laws.'[3]

Unfortunately the satisfaction which was in the first instance created by the news was damped by the rumours, which continually acquired more definite shape, that the French Emperor had decided on the annexation of Savoy and Nice to France. Whatever excuses may be urged for the Emperor's conduct, the news of it destroyed all confidence in his promises. Those who disliked the treaty of commerce were encouraged by the growing distrust in the Emperor's policy to declaim against its provisions; and their hostility was inflamed, their arguments were enforced, by the language which was used in Paris, where it was

[1] De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iii. p. 222, and Morley's *Cobden*, vol. ii. p. 265.

[2] The *Times*, 16th of January, 1860.

[3] Morley's *Cobden*, vol. ii. p. 265.

said that England had sold her birthright for a mess of pottage.[1]

It was not difficult, moreover, to criticise the treaty from two different standpoints. For it was fair, on the one hand, to urge that commercial treaties were opposed to the whole teachings of the school of which Mr. Cobden was the most illustrious representative. Free trade, so these men had taught, was good in itself; and, as a country should not impose a tariff for the purpose of retaliation, it followed that it should not remit duties for the mere sake of obtaining some advantages in return.[2] On the other hand, it was open to argument that, however good a thing reciprocity or free trade might be in itself, the nation could not afford it at that particular time. Wisely or unwisely, it was committed to a huge expenditure. It had reached the year in which it had been told that the income tax should cease, and it was paying the heaviest income tax which had ever been imposed in a year of peace. It was concurrently burdened with heavy taxes on such necessaries as tea and sugar. It was absurd—so it was argued—to reduce the duties on French claret (for a reduction of the wine duties was, it was understood, the leading feature of the treaty) from more than 5*s.* to 3*s.* a gallon, and to leave the duty on tea—the solace of the poor—at the crushing weight of 1*s.* a pound. If the country could afford to throw away 2,000,000*l.*, let it at least devote it to cheapening the luxuries of the poor, instead of squandering it in tempting the middle classes to substitute bad claret for good beer.

There was, moreover, another article in the treaty which almost immediately provoked criticism; for the treaty proposed to pledge this country to the free export of 'an article of such vital and essential importance as

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 609.

[2] Mr. Cobden was himself alive to this objection. Morley's *Cobden*, vol. ii. p. 239.

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coal.'[1] Coal was the basis of our prosperity in peace, the assurance of our safety in war. Its export would accelerate our own downfall; for, in consuming our coal, we were living on our capital, and hastening the day when the great cities of manufacturing England would be condemned to silence and inaction. The eventual exhaustion of our coalfields has been a theme on which the Cassandras of statistics have liked to dwell for more than a hundred years. Williams, in his 'Natural History of the Mineral Kingdom'—a book which was published before the close of the eighteenth century—devoted a chapter to the limited quantity of coal in Great Britain, and since his time other writers have followed in his wake, and warned the public of the possible exhaustion of our coal, or at any rate of the possible exhaustion of particular coalfields. The importance of the coal measures of the North of England has made such writers pay special attention to Durham and Northumberland. But it is possible at any rate to draw some consolation from their gloomy conclusions. For, in 1846, when the production of these counties amounted to 10,000,000 tons a year, Mr. Greenwell, an authority of repute, predicted that 331 years would witness their exhaustion. The production rose, in 1854, to 14,000,000 tons, when Mr. Hall, another authority, computed their life at 365 years. From 1854 to 1864 the production gradually rose to 16,000,000 tons a year, and a third authority, Mr. Hull, estimated that the fields would last for 450 years. It is, of course, true that the life of our coalfields can be no more perpetual than the life of the great sun round which we are revolving. They must, sooner or later, be exhausted, as it, sooner or later, must cool. But it is some satisfaction to reflect that every increase in the production of a

[1] The words are Lord Derby's. *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 1333.

particular coalfield from 1846 to 1864 has been attended by a fresh estimate, giving a longer life to the mines; and that the enterprise of projectors in opening new mines, and the ingenuity of inventors in overcoming difficulties in underground working, had placed at our disposal at the end of that period a larger amount of coal than was thought to be available at the beginning.[1]

Thus, as the day approached when the treaty had to be explained to Parliament, doubts were everywhere felt as to its expediency. As a famous diarist wrote, on the closing pages of his diary, 'Clarendon shook his head, Overstone pronounced against the treaty, the "Times" thundered against it, and there [was] little doubt that it was unpopular, and becoming more so every day.'[2] Unluckily at this juncture, too, Mr. Gladstone, whose duty it was to explain it, fell ill, and the Budget, which had been announced for the 6th, was in consequence postponed till the 10th of February. Even then Mr. Gladstone had only imperfectly recovered his health, and, in the opinion of his medical advisers, required much longer repose; yet he made a speech which almost terminated controversy, and which one of his opponents declared would 'remain among the monuments of English eloquence as long as the language lasts.'[3]

The Budget of 1860.

His position was full of difficulty. Apart from all questions connected with the French treaty—and more than 1,000,000*l.* a year was required to fulfil the obligations to which Lord Cowley and Mr. Cobden had committed the Government—Mr. Gladstone was face

[1] The statistics which I have quoted may be found in various places. See, *inter alia*, Mr. Jevons's well-known book on our coal supplies, p. 18. It is amusing to reflect that Mr. Jevons did not see that the figures which he was quoting afforded a tolerably satisfactory answer to his own argument.

[2] *Greville*, vol. ii. p. 289.

[3] Sir E. Lytton Bulwer in *Hansard*, vol. clviii. p. 151.

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to face with a heavy deficit of nearly 10,000,000*l.*[1] This deficit, indeed, could be converted into a small surplus if Mr. Gladstone chose to renew the income tax at its old rate of 9*d.*, and simultaneously to continue without reduction the heavy duties on tea and sugar.[2] But this course was one which it was eminently difficult for Mr. Gladstone to follow; for, in his first Budget, he had described the income tax as 'an engine of gigantic power for great national purposes,' which it was undesirable to maintain as a portion of the ordinary or permanent revenue of the country, and had declared that, after suffering two successive reductions, it would cease on the 5th of April, 1860. Mr. Gladstone was thus to atone, at the same moment, for his own optimism and for the pessimism of his chief: for his own optimism, for he was obviously unable to fulfil the promises which he had given; for his chief's pessimism, since the increased expenditure, for which Lord Palmerston's distrust of Napoleon was so largely responsible, was one of the chief causes which made it impossible in 1860 to redeem the pledges of 1853.

In these circumstances, if Mr. Gladstone had been an ordinary financier, he would almost certainly have

[1] The Budget figures were as follows:

Income.		Expenditure.	
Customs	£22,700,000	Debt	£26,200,000
Excise	19,170,000	Consol. Fund	2,000,000
Stamps	8,000,000	Army (including 500,000*l.* for China)	15,800,000
Taxes	3,250,000	Navy (including Packet Service)	13,900,000
Income Tax, Arrears of	2,400,000	Civil Service	7,500,000
Post Office	3,400,000	Revenue Depts.	4,700,000
Crown Lands	280,000		
Miscellaneous	1,500,000		
	£60,700,000		£70,100,000

Hansard, vol. clvi. pp. 816, 818.

The War Duties on Tea and Sugar would yield	£2,100,000
Income Tax at 9*d.*	7,672,000
	£9,772,000
Original Deficit	9,400,000
Surplus	£372,000

Ibid., p. 819.

abstained from devising any heroic measure. By continuing the war taxation for another twelve months he could have turned a deficit of 9,400,000*l.* into a surplus of 372,000*l.*, and, with this surplus, have patiently awaited some more favourable opportunity for financial reform. It is true that such an arrangement would have made no provision for the concessions which had been made in the French treaty; but it so happened that France, on her part, was disabled by the pledges which her Emperor had given in 1856 from making any important changes in her tariff till the autumn of 1861, and that Napoleon III. allowed the British Government to understand that he would not press for the fulfilment of the British concessions until he was in a position to respond to them by seriously dealing with his own tariff.[1] An ordinary financier, therefore, could have balanced his budget, and secured the advantages of ratifying the French treaty, postponing its inception till some date to be agreed upon in 1861.

Mr. Gladstone, however, was no ordinary financier; and his imagination was fired by the opportunity which the French treaty afforded him. He saw that the treaty paved the way for a measure of free trade as far-reaching and as large as that which Sir Robert Peel had carried out in 1845; and he concluded that such a measure would do more to promote the prosperity of the country and the happiness of its people than even the redemption of the pledges of 1853. So thinking, he had not merely the courage to confess that the circumstances of the time—the vast increase in the expenditure of the nation—made it impossible for him to fulfil the promises which he had somewhat rashly given seven years before;[2] but he had the far higher courage

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 852.

[2] 'In 1853 the whole amount voted for supply and services of every description . . . was 24,279,000*l.*; that was the proportion of the public expenditure that was under the

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to acknowledge that these promises should not have been given, since it was possible to confer a greater boon on the working classes than they would have derived from a cheaper breakfast table. In language which was as new as it was true he asserted:

'I do not hesitate to say that it is a mistake to suppose that the best way of giving benefit to the labouring classes is simply to operate on the articles consumed by them. If you want to do them the maximum of good, you should rather operate on the articles that give them the maximum of employment.' [1]

And it so happened that, apart from all considerations connected with the French treaty, there was another reason which, in Mr. Gladstone's judgment, made it important for Parliament to confer at that particular time some great commercial reform on the country. For in 1860 a sum of 2,000,000*l.* and upwards, which 'we have hitherto been obliged annually to pay on the national debt, came into our possession,' through the termination of the long annuities. Was it tolerable that such a sum—'a mighty engine for the purpose of relief'—should be simply cast into the great gulf of expenditure, there to be swallowed up and disappear? [2] Such an ignoble result could not commend itself to a financier who, almost alone in the Cabinet, had been protesting against the increased estimates which panic had produced. For seven years—in fact, since Mr. Gladstone's great Budget of 1853—the course of commercial reform had been interrupted. In Mr. Gladstone's opinion, the happy cessation of the long annuities required that it should be resumed.

Stimulated, then, by the result of Mr. Cobden's

control of Parliament. But in 1860-61 these charges amounted to 39,000,000*l.*, showing an increase in your expenditure of 14,721,000*l.*' *Ibid.*, p. 821. In the face of such expenditure it became obviously impossible to redeem the pledge of 1853.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 831.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 827.

labours, and availing himself of the opportunity which the termination of the long annuities provided, Mr. Gladstone decided on giving immediate effect to the French treaty. But by a bold stroke, which was suggested to him by his financial genius, he decided on going far beyond what Mr. Cobden had done. Mr. Cobden had brought home a measure of reciprocity; Mr. Gladstone converted it into a measure of free trade. Instead of giving France any preferential treatment, he reduced the duties on all goods, from whatever quarter they came, to the point which the French treaty required. He thus deprived the critics of the treaty of one of the most telling arguments against it. The bargain with France was almost smothered in the broader and more general arrangement with which Mr. Gladstone surrounded it.

These changes, which Mr. Gladstone anticipated would relieve the consumer to the extent of 1,737,000*l.*, only imposed a charge on the revenue of 1,190,000*l.* a year, the increased consumption invariably following reduced taxation being relied on to provide for the additional 547,000*l.* But these changes alone were not sufficient to satisfy Mr. Gladstone's keen appetite for a great measure of free trade. Had not the cessation of the long annuities relieved the taxpayer of 2,000,000*l.* a year? and was it tolerable that a free-trader should be content with devoting only a little more than one-half this sum to the development of free trade? Mr. Gladstone, at any rate, proceeded to supplement the proposals he had already made, for the purpose of giving effect to the treaty, with a measure of customs reform. Under this complementary proposal he swept away various duties on food such as butter and eggs, and fruit such as oranges and dates; and at the same time largely reduced the duties on five other articles—timber, currants, raisins, figs, and hops—at a cost of

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910,000*l.* a year.[1] These proposals five years afterwards furnished Mr. Disraeli with a text for one of his amusing, but inaccurate, epigrams. Mr. Gladstone, so he said, 'had 2,000,000*l.* of taxation which was dying a natural death. It was a fund to which Englishmen had been looking for relief for half a century. Well, what did [he] do with it? He took 1,000,000*l.* and turned it into ducks: he took another 1,000,000*l.* and turned it into drakes.'[2] Posterity may laugh at Mr. Disraeli's epigrams, but it will do well to recollect what Mr. Gladstone accomplished. In 1842, when Sir Robert Peel commenced the great work of customs reform, the customs tariff comprised 1,052 articles. The Budget of 1842, which repealed no duty, increased the list, and in 1845 the tariff still comprised 1,163 articles. Mainly in consequence of the changes introduced in that year, the tariff in 1853 was reduced to 466 articles, and before 1859 it had been further purged, and contained only 419 articles. The Budget of 1860 reduced the list to only 48 articles.[3]

Mr. Gladstone had thus far increased the difficulty of his initial task by remitting 2,000,000*l.* of taxation: 1,190,000*l.* in consequence of the French treaty, 910,000*l.* on account of his supplemental measure of customs reform. He next proceeded, by a variety of

[1] The articles swept out of the tariff were: Butter, 95,000*l.*; tallow, 87,000*l.*; cheese, 44,000*l.*; oranges and lemons, 32,000*l.*; eggs, 22,000*l.*; nuts, 12,000*l.*; nutmegs, 11,000*l.*; paper, 10,000*l.*; liquorice, 9,000*l.*; dates, 7,000*l.*, and various minor articles. The total cost of these alterations was 382,000*l.* The articles on which the duties were reduced were: Timber (from 7*s.* 6*d.* and 15*s.*) to the rates on colonial timber, 1*s.* and 2*s.*; currants, from 15*s.* 9*d.* to 7*s.*; raisins and figs, from 10*s.* to 7*s.*; hops, from 45*s.* to 14*s.* The cost of these five reductions was 650,000*l.*, making, with the previous loss of 382,000*l.*, 1,032,000*l.* a year. This loss Mr. Gladstone expected would be largely diminished by increased consumption, and he accordingly placed the real loss at only 910,000*l.* *Hansard*, clvi. p. 853.

[2] Hitchman's *Life of Lord Beaconsfield*, p. 367.

[3] *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 867. Sir R. Peel in 1845 considered that he reduced the tariff from 813 to 383 articles. *Hist. of England*, vol. iv. p. 45. The fact is that the tariff was so complicated that it is very difficult to say exactly how many articles it did contain.

comparatively small changes in the customs, the excise, and the stamps, to create a new revenue of 982,000*l.* a year in a manner which was hardly likely to raise objection from any single person. This part of the Budget of 1860 has attracted comparatively little attention, yet perhaps nothing showed Mr. Gladstone's skill as a financier more clearly than the ease with which he thus practically raised a revenue of 1,000,000*l.* without eliciting the remonstrance, and in some cases with an actual acknowledgment of thanks, from the persons affected.[1]

The paper duty.

These changes, however, again reduced him to his old position. While the cessation of the long annuities was providing him with more than 2,000,000*l.* a year, the alterations which he had so far made were only absorbing a little more than 1,000,000*l.* He decided in consequence on grappling with a new subject, and on sweeping away, at a cost of 1,000,000*l.*, the excise duty on paper.

There was this, at any rate, to be said in favour of the proposal. Mr. Milner Gibson, who filled the place in Lord Palmerston's Cabinet which Mr. Cobden had

[1] The 982,000*l.* was chiefly raised as follows:

1*d.* registration fee on all packages of goods imported	£300,000
Extension of bonding system to inland towns	120,000
Duty on chicory, protection to coffee duty	90,000
1*d.* on brokers' contract notes, &c.	100,000
3*d.* on dock warrants	100,000
Reduction of agreement stamps from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 6*d.* with abolition of exemption on agreements of less than 20*l.*	20,000
Savings in Customs and Excise establishments through simplification of work	86,000
Minor charges	166,000
	£982,000

Hansard, vol. clvi. pp. 854–858.

The only one of these changes which led to much discussion was the tax on brokers' contract notes. By an Act of the eighteenth century introduced by Sir John Barnard, it was made illegal to gamble on the Stock Exchange by selling stock which the seller had not actually got. Mr. Gladstone repealed the Act, which was continually transgressed, and placed a 1*d.* duty on these contracts. See, for discussions on this proposal, *inter alia*, *Hansard*, vol. clviii. pp. 913, 1696.

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been offered, had introduced a motion for the abolition of the duty in 1858. Mr. Disraeli, with only a minority at his back, had not ventured to oppose a motion which his friends almost unanimously disliked, and had consented to accept that part of it which affirmed the duty to be impolitic if its author would omit another portion declaring that arrangements should be made for dispensing with it.[1] The House of Commons, therefore, had formally decided, on the invitation of a Liberal member, and with the concurrence of a Conservative Ministry, that the paper duty was impolitic. Perhaps a later generation, which has had no experience of the impost, may require some facts to prove its impolicy. In the first place, the tax interfered with the production of the country and the employment of the people. It was stated in 1858, on the authority of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, that the United States had 750 mills producing 270,000,000 lbs. of paper, while the United Kingdom had only 400 mills, many of which were disappearing year by year, producing only 166,000,000 lbs.[2] Yet the population of the United States in 1858 was not so large as the population of this country. And, in the next place, the duty fell with almost crushing severity on the cheap literature which it was so desirable to circulate. It hardly amounted to 1 per cent. on the price of the fashionable novel. It was no less than 30 per cent. on the price of a cheap newspaper. The managers of the 'Standard,' whose proprietors had just reduced its price to 1*d.*, declared that they were paying 10,000*l.* a year in duty. They alleged that if the duty were repealed they could use a better paper, employ additional literary talent, and double the 'already enormous circulation' which they boasted

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cli. p. 125. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 115.

they had secured.[1] Mr. Gladstone had therefore solid ground for the step which he was taking, and could even rely on some assistance from the Conservative camp. But in bringing forward his proposal he did not depend on such adventitious aid. He had made up his mind that the 2,000,000*l.* saved from the termination of the long annuities should be devoted to commercial reform, instead of being swept into 'the gulf of expenditure.' It was with this principle that he had set out at the commencement of his great speech; it was this principle which he again laid down on completing his explanation.[2]

Many men would have thought that the hardest part of Mr. Gladstone's task remained to be accomplished. He had purged the tariff, but he had hitherto provided no means for paying the bill. With Mr. Gladstone, however, the task of raising millions was no more difficult than the task of remitting millions. By taking up the credits allowed on the hop and malt duties he secured 1,400,000*l.*; by renewing the income tax and increasing it to 10*d.* he provided the balance that he required.

The charm of Mr. Gladstone's speech had its effect on the House. Opposition was disarmed by the eloquence of the Minister, and all that Mr. Disraeli could do was to plead for a little delay before the House committed itself to the proposals which had been laid before it. The short respite which was thus secured enabled criticism to raise its head, and the opponents of

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cli. pp. 112, 113. The circulation of the *Standard* in 1858 was claimed to be 50,000 a day. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. clvi. p. 866. 'It may be as well to repeat the figures. The commercial treaty caused a loss to the revenue of 1,190,000*l.*, the supplemental plan of 910,000*l.*, the paper duty and other changes in the excise 990,000*l.* On the other hand, the new duties and savings on establishments produced 982,000*l.* 'There will be a net loss to the revenue for 1860-61 of 2,108,000*l.*, a sum which, as the committee will observe, very nearly indeed corresponds with the amount of relief which we are about to receive by the falling in of the long annuities.'

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the proposal, to organise opposition. But even then the Conservatives did not venture on joining direct issue with Mr. Gladstone. Instead of doing so, they suffered Mr. Disraeli to propose that the House should consider and assent to the engagements of the treaty before it went into committee on the Customs Acts.[1]

Mr. Disraeli's motion.

But this motion only afforded Mr. Gladstone a fresh opportunity of showing his marked superiority over the Conservative leader. He showed—and whatever opinion may be formed on the merits of his proposal, few persons will doubt the success of his demonstration—that the only way in which the House could effectually carry out the stipulation that the provisions of the treaty should receive legislative sanction was by adopting the course which he had himself suggested. The House, convinced by what the Attorney-General called his most eloquent and crushing speech,[2] gave the Minister an adequate majority.[3] But perhaps the size of the majority was the least significant result of the debate. The Conservatives cared very little about a decision on the technical or constitutional point on which their leader had chosen to stake the issue; in fact, they had not yet learned to regard him with the servile admiration which fifteen years later was to blind them to his defects; and their 'hatred and distrust' of him were so great that they paid little heed to his discomfiture.[4]

Mr. Du Cane's amendment.

The following day, however, a younger member of the party, Mr. Du Cane, the member for Essex, afforded the Conservatives an opportunity for resisting the proposal on other grounds. He asked the House to

[1] The arguments which Mr. Disraeli urged were employed on the same day by Lord Derby in the House of Lords. It may be assumed, therefore, that the course which Mr. Disraeli adopted was taken in concert with Lord Derby.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1395.

[3] Mr. Disraeli was beaten by 293 votes to 230. *Ibid.*, p. 1443.

[4] *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 292.

Hansard, vol. clvi. pp. 1320, 1355.

declare that it was not expedient to add to the existing deficiency by diminishing the ordinary revenue in the manner proposed, and to disappoint the just expectations of the country by reimposing the income tax at an unnecessarily high rate.[1] In words, therefore, Mr. Du Cane did not ask the House to express any opinion on the policy of the treaty, or of the other proposals in the Budget. He simply invited it to declare that commercial reforms should not be made in a year of deficit, and at the cost of the income-tax payers. But in the speech in which he introduced his motion, and in the discussion which followed it, the debate ranged far beyond the narrow terms of the amendment. The policy of the treaty, the oppression of the income tax, the alleged distaste of the British for light wines, the injustice, to the brewers who sold beer and to the country gentlemen who grew barley, of reducing the duty on one beverage without simultaneously diminishing the taxation on the other—these were among the subjects which were stated and restated to the House. But on the main issue Mr. Gladstone had a triumphant reply. It was impossible for the House to pass Mr. Du Cane's motion without by implication condemning the Budgets of 1842, 1845, and 1853; for in 1842 Sir Robert Peel had found a deficit, had intentionally increased the deficit which he had found, and had revived the income tax to procure a surplus; in 1845 Sir Robert Peel had created a large deficit by wholesale remissions of taxation, and had continued the income tax to terminate it; while in 1853 Mr. Gladstone had found a deficiency, had increased the deficiency, and had again used the income tax to extinguish it. How could the House of Commons, how could even the Conservative party, which had long since abstained from repeating its objections to free

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 1497.

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trade, declare, in the face of such precedents as these, that it was inexpedient to add to an existing deficiency by diminishing the ordinary revenue? Mr. Gladstone was obviously walking in the path which had been opened by Sir Robert Peel in 1842, and which he had himself followed in 1853.[1] If Sir Robert Peel was in the right, how could it be said that he was in the wrong?

If, however, there was this difficulty in accepting the first part of Mr. Du Cane's motion, there was another difficulty about the second part of it; for there was no doubt that the promises which had been held out to the country in 1853 had been given in circumstances which no longer prevailed. The increase in the naval and military expenditure, which no man could have foreseen in 1853, amounted to much more than the whole sum which the income tax produced. Unless, therefore, it could be shown that Mr. Gladstone was responsible for this expenditure—and it was, on the contrary, notorious that he was foremost in the Cabinet in objecting to it—it could hardly in fairness be denied that he was in this respect controlled by adverse circumstances for which he had no responsibility. It is true that in the debate on Sir G. C. Lewis's Budget in 1857, and on Mr. Disraeli's Budget in 1858, Mr. Gladstone had spoken as if the old expectations held out in 1853 should be fulfilled in 1860. Mr. Disraeli thrust home this point with all the dexterity of a skilled debater.[2] And even those who are jealous of Mr. Gladstone's reputation may admit that his utterances in these years were ill advised. But the real question which Mr. Gladstone had to consider in 1860 was whether he would adhere to the letter of his

[1] Mr. Bright indicated, in his speech, this defence. Cf. *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 1630. But the argument was much more forcibly put by Mr. Gladstone himself. *Ibid.*, p. 1788.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1809.

'rusty' declarations, or avail himself of the unique opportunity with which Mr. Cobden's negotiations at Paris had provided him. He chose the better and the wiser part. The skill and the eloquence with which he defended his course were rewarded with a great majority,[1] and raised him to a pinnacle which he had not previously attained. But his skill and eloquence did more than assure his own triumph. His policy conferred an advantage on his fellow-countrymen which was as immediate as it was incontestable; for, while the exports of British produce to France were in 1859 worth less than 5,000,000*l.*, their value in 1869 had risen to nearly 12,000,000*l.*[2] The prosperity which the Budget produced had its effect on the revenue of future years, and caused it to progress by those leaps and bounds which enabled fresh reductions of taxation to stimulate still further the growth of trade.

Mr. Gladstone's success.

The progress which was made in committee in discussing some of the main proposals of the Budget enabled the Government on the 8th of March to take the course, which Mr. Disraeli contended it should have taken in the first instance, of asking the House of Commons to concur in an Address to the Crown approving the provisions of the treaty. The debate afforded a fresh opportunity for attacking the Emperor's policy in annexing Savoy and Nice. Was this a time, so it was publicly asked in Parliament, to express continued amity with the Emperor? 'You might be on visiting terms with a person, but that was no reason for being his affectionate friend.'[3] An amendment was actually moved inviting the House to decline expressing any opinion on the treaty till the Emperor's final intentions on the subject of the annexations were made

[1] Mr. Du Cane's motion was rejected by 339 votes to 123. *Hansard*, vol. clvi. p. 1818.

[2] The exact figures were in 1859, 4,807,602*l.*, and in 1869, 11,438,330*l.* See Statistical Abstracts.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. clvii. p. 162.

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known to this country;[1] and though the amendment was withdrawn, another, condemning the provision of the treaty which pledged this country not to prohibit the exportation of coal, was substituted for it, and defended on the double ground that our coalfields were necessarily approaching exhaustion, and that, coal being a requisite for war, it was unwise to furnish France with the means of making war more efficiently.[2] But, notwithstanding these arguments, and the irritation of all parties at the conduct of the Emperor, the feeling in favour of the treaty was so strong that the amendment was rejected by a decisive majority.[3] The Address to the Crown was almost immediately put and carried.[4] Three days afterwards the Lords assented to the same Address, and the safety of the treaty was thus assured.[5]

The treaty confirmed by Parliament.

If, however, the common sense of the House insisted on giving effect to that part of the Budget which dealt with the French treaty, Mr. Gladstone had a much harder task before him in carrying his proposal for the repeal of the duty on paper. Though it was difficult to defend a tax, which all parties in the State had agreed in condemning as impolitic, it was easy to contend that the moment chosen for its repeal was inopportune, and that there were other fiscal burdens which were even more grievous than the paper duty. The French treaty had been supported by majorities of over a hundred; the second reading of the Paper Duty Repeal Bill was carried by a majority of only fifty-

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clvii. p. 163.

[2] See the debate, *ibid.*, p. 247. The debate on this amendment was remarkable for a speech by Mr. Vivian, who, from his knowledge of the subject as a coal-owner, was able to tear to pieces much of the case against the article of the treaty dealing with coal. *Ibid.*, p. 268. This speech was afterwards quoted in conversation as a proof that, on any subject, there was always some one in the House of Commons who possessed more knowledge than both front benches.

[3] By 282 votes to 56. *Ibid.*, p. 327.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 330.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 548–644.

three.[1] But even this success did not endure. Every day that passed, every rumour that pointed to the ambitious policy of the Emperor, strengthened the hands of the Opposition; and at last, in May, the third reading of the Bill was only carried by a narrow majority of nine.[2]

The struggle on the paper duty.

The division, which occurred early on the morning of the 9th of May, naturally encouraged the Opposition. On the following day, when the Customs Bill was before the Lords, Lord Derby condemned the French treaty as the work of 'inexperienced agents' who had approached the subject 'with inadequate means and information,' and who had 'left us absolutely and entirely at the mercy of the French Government;' but he added that, greatly as he disapproved the treaty, and the financial arrangements of the Government, he shrank from the responsibility of disturbing the whole finance of the year by asking the Lords to reject the Bill. He went on to point out, however, that there was another subject, the repeal of the paper duty, on which the Government was asking Parliament to sanction 'a wholly useless and dangerous sacrifice of nearly 1,500,000*l.* of public revenue.' No embarrassment could result to the Executive if Parliament, by the rejection of this proposal, preserved a large sum of money to the exchequer. Lord Monteagle, who approached the subject with the authority of a statesman who, more than twenty years before, had been responsible for the financial administration of the country, had already announced his intention of opposing the second reading of the Paper Duty Repeal Bill. Lord Derby, on his part, undertook to do everything in his power to accomplish its rejection.[3]

Lord Derby's opposition.

[1] By 245 votes to 192. *Hansard*, vol. clvii. p. 436.

[2] By 219 votes to 210. *Ibid.*, vol. clviii. p. 967.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 1002-1004. Lord Monteagle, as Mr. Spring Rice, had been Chancellor of the Exchequer in Lord Melbourne's Administration.

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The declaration was in one sense unusual. It is not the custom on the second reading of one Bill for great party leaders to announce their intention of defeating another. And the declaration was not only unusual, it was also unwise. No one doubted Lord Derby's power to throw out the measure when it reached the House of Lords; but many people thought that the temporary triumph which he was likely to secure would strengthen the hands of the free-traders in the House of Commons. Men who disliked the repeal of the paper duties would dislike much more the interference of the Lords in the financial arrangements of the year. It was the function of the House of Commons to initiate taxation. People were already saying that their admitted privilege would be deprived of much of its value if the Lords had the power of continuing taxation which the Commons had declared should cease.

Lord Palmerston's conduct.

If the action of Lord Derby was rash, the conduct of Lord Palmerston was treacherous. No doubt the repeal of the paper duty was Mr. Gladstone's measure, but it had been adopted by the Cabinet; and Lord Palmerston, as a man of honour, was bound to support his lieutenant in a policy in which he had concurred. Yet, three days before Lord Derby's intention was made known, Lord Palmerston told the Queen that the narrow majority in the Commons on the third reading of the Bill would 'probably encourage the House of Lords to throw it out when it comes to their House, and Viscount Palmerston is bound to say that, if they do so, they will perform a good public service.'[1] And it is almost certain that Lord Palmerston did not confine his opinion to the Queen alone; for, on the 12th of May, Lord Malmesbury was deputed by Lord Derby to tell Lady Palmerston that, if Lord John Russell, Mr. Gladstone,

[1] Martin's *Prince Consort*, vol. v. p. 100.

and Mr. Milner Gibson should leave the Ministry in consequence of the postponement of the Reform Bill and the defeat of the Paper Bill, the Conservative party would undertake to support Lord Palmerston for the rest of the Session.[1] When the great debate in the Lords took place, Lady Palmerston was in the gallery 'openly expressing her wishes that the Bill might be rejected by a large majority;' and, when the majority against the measure proved to be larger than its friends had feared or its enemies had hoped, Lord Palmerston mockingly endeavoured to console Mr. Gladstone by assuring him that his disappointment was nothing to his own in failing to win the Derby.[2] It is the fashion of many people to say that Mr. Gladstone was a difficult colleague, too ready to resign on every occasion of difference; but perhaps it would be impossible to state any instance in the nineteenth century in which a Prime Minister has behaved more disloyally to a colleague than Lord Palmerston behaved to Mr. Gladstone in 1860, or to quote any case which would have better justified the extreme course of resignation than that which was furnished by Lord Palmerston's conduct in that year.[3]

[1] *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 521.

[2] *Greville*, vol. ii. p. 310. The Bill was rejected by 193 votes to 104. It is, perhaps, an illustration of the manner in which the House of Lords conducts, or conducted, its business, that, while the three hundred members were rushing from the House after the division, fourteen peers remained behind to throw out a useful little Bill which had passed through all its stages (except the third reading in the Lords) almost without debate. The Bill thus sacrificed was intended to empower local bodies to effect public improvements by providing recreation grounds &c. for the people (*Hansard*, vol. clviii. pp. 1545-1548), and was promoted with this object by Lord Shaftesbury.

[3] Incredible as it may seem, Lord Palmerston was anxious to part with his most brilliant colleague. Lord Malmesbury wrote on the 2nd of June: 'I had a satisfactory interview with Lord and Lady Palmerston yesterday. They are as anxious as we are to get rid of the Reform Bill, but do not exactly see their way. It is evident he does not wish to lose Lord John, though he would be very glad if Gladstone resigned.' *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, p. 522. I have not thought it necessary in this book to refer to Mr. Gladstone's frequent threats of resignation. The reader who wishes to examine personal questions of this kind cannot do better than consult Mr. Morley's admirable biography.

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The rejection of the Paper Duty Bill.

The rejection of the Bill raised a grave issue. From a very early period the Commons have enjoyed and maintained an exclusive right to initiate taxation. 'The right of granting aids and supplies to the Crown,' so it was subsequently affirmed in this very Session, 'is in the Commons alone as an essential part of their Constitution.'[1] For a long time, moreover, the Commons had claimed that measures granting taxation should be simply affirmed or rejected by the Lords without amendment, while the Lords had practically acquiesced in the claim, though they had never formally consented to it.[2] But there was no doubt that on rare occasions the Lords had exercised the right of rejecting Supply Bills, and that a Prime Minister in his seat in Parliament in 1853, while urging his brother peers to pass such a Bill, had admitted 'their full right' to throw it out.[3] It was thus already plain, and it was soon to be made plainer, that according to the strict letter of the Constitution, if such a phrase can be properly applied to the unwritten usage which forms the Constitution of this country, Lord Derby was within his rights in advocating the rejection of the Paper Duty Repeal Bill, and that the Lords were within their rights in rejecting it. But if, in 1860, the Upper House of Parliament offended against no technical rule, it made the grave mistake of infringing the spirit of the Constitution. The usage of a century and a half had practically determined that the control and settlement of taxation were with the Commons, and the decision of the Lords to continue a tax which the Commons had repealed was a violation of constitutional usage which no

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clix. p. 1384; and cf. the resolution of the 3rd of July, 1678, reprinted in Todd's *Parliamentary Government* (revised edition), vol. ii. p. 226.

[2] *Ibid.* Sir E. May says that, when in 1763 the Lords opposed the Wine and Cider Duties Bill, it was observed that this was the first occasion on which they had been known to divide on a Money Bill. *Const. Hist.*, vol. ii. p. 107.

[3] *Hansard*, vol. cxxvii. pp. 671, 1470.

House of Commons could have been expected to tolerate.

If in 1860 the House of Commons had been led by a resolute Liberal, the conduct of the Lords in rejecting the measure might have provoked a crisis and have left a permanent mark on the Legislature; but the Commons in 1860 were led by the veteran statesman who disliked Mr. Gladstone and all his works, and who reflected that the retention of the paper duty would increase the revenue available for the fortifications which he was resolved to construct. Instead, therefore, of precipitating a conflict between the two Houses, Lord Palmerston contented himself with appointing a committee to search for precedents with respect to the practice of the Commons on such an occasion as that which had arisen; and he had the dexterity to place in the chair of the committee a gentleman who had held high office in the Conservative Ministry of Lord Derby, whose knowledge of constitutional history and of the law and practice of Parliament exerted an influence and authority which few other living men could command,[1] and whose conciliatory temper made it almost certain that he would find some expedient for smoothing the ruffled feelings of the House.

Lord Palmerston's resolutions.

Armed with the report of the committee, and adopting its opinions, Lord Palmerston on the 5th of July proposed three resolutions, (i) affirming that the right of granting aids and supplies to the Crown is in the Commons alone, and that the limitation of such grants as to the matter, manner, measure, and time is only in them; (ii) admitting that the Lords had exercised the right of rejecting Bills of Supply, but stating that the exercise of that right had not been frequent, and was

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clviii. pp. 1608, 1653, 1717, 1742. Cf. Lord Palmerston's acknowledgment of Mr. Spencer Walpole's services as chairman of the committee. *Ibid.*, vol. clix. p. 1384.

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justly regarded by the Commons with great jealousy; and (iii) declaring that the Commons had it in their power so to impose and remit taxes, and to frame Bills of Supply, that their rights might be maintained inviolate. These resolutions were accepted by the vast majority of the House as a satisfactory conclusion of an unfortunate dispute. Even Mr. Gladstone, though he seized the occasion to denounce the 'gigantic innovation' which the Lords had introduced into procedure, admitted that they contained an intelligible and firm declaration of the rights of the House of Commons.[1] And this admission made it certain that the resolutions would pass.[2] One thing, however, remained to be done. The Customs duty on paper had hitherto exceeded the Excise duty on that article, and some protection had thus been afforded to the British manufacturer. In accordance with the spirit, and perhaps also with the letter, of the commercial treaty with France, such protection was no longer possible, and before the close of the session Mr. Gladstone introduced and carried a resolution for terminating it.[3]

Additional expenditure absorbs the proceeds of the paper duty.

It was Mr. Gladstone's good fortune to propose and carry the two greatest Budgets of the last half of the nineteenth century; but it was his misfortune that, on each of those occasions, his over-sanguine temperament betrayed him into expectations doomed to be disappointed by events which he had no power to control.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clix. p. 1430, 1431. This is the speech which Lord John Russell described as 'magnificently mad.' *Life of Lord J. Russell*, vol. ii. p. 344, note. Sir R. Phillimore had some doubt whether Mr. Gladstone ought to have made this speech after Lord Palmerston had spoken in an 'almost totally opposite sense.' See Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii. p. 34.

[2] They were passed after two nights' debate on the 6th of July. *Hansard*, vol. clix. pp. 1602, 1606.

[3] By 266 votes to 233. *Ibid.*, vol. clx. p. 808. In the text I have stated broadly the features of Mr. Gladstone's proposal. He at the same time provided for some slight alterations in the figures of the year which had become necessary in consequence of alterations in committee on minor points connected with the inception of the treaty.

In 1853 he failed to foresee the Crimean War; and the expenditure which that war involved made it ultimately impossible for him to redeem the pledges of his Budget speech. In 1860 his Budget estimate was falsified by the prolongation of hostilities in China. In February Mr. Gladstone had hoped that the ends of the expedition might be attained without actual war, and he had placed the cost of it at 2,550,000*l.*; but in July he had to acknowledge that the course of events had frustrated his hopes, and that it was his duty to provide for an additional expenditure of 3,300,000*l.* The action of the Lords in retaining the paper duty and some other minor changes supplied him with nearly 1,000,000*l.* of this sum. The additional 2,000,000*l.* (or, more accurately, 2,336,000*l.*) which he required, he decided to raise partly by loan and partly by taxation. The taxation which he found it necessary to impose he obtained by a permanent addition of 1*s.* 11*d.* a gallon to the duty on spirits.[1] There was no doubt that this arrangement cost Mr. Gladstone a considerable pang; for he was practically compelled to appropriate to the services of the year the proceeds of a duty, which he had himself so strenuously urged should be repealed, and which the action of the Lords—or, as he had described it, the 'gigantic innovation' which the Lords had introduced into procedure—had so unconstitutionally, but so conveniently, preserved.

Mr. Gladstone's position.

In these circumstances it was not, perhaps, surprising that Mr. Gladstone should have suffered acutely during the progress of the Session. An accurate observer described him on the last page of his diary as half-dead, broken-down, tempest-tossed;[2] and an intimate friend, a little earlier, recorded that he was

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clix. pp. 1963–1980.

[2] *Greville*, 3rd Series, vol. ii. p. 314.

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'very unwell, I greatly fear killing himself.'[1] The strain on his excitable temperament was undoubtedly great, for the experiences through which he had passed have fallen to the lot of few statesmen. In six months he had sustained the alternate favours and buffetings of fortune. His earlier speeches had raised him to extraordinary prominence; his later failures had depressed his hopes and clouded his prospects. The anomaly of his position, moreover, was filling him with anxiety. Though he had accepted office under Lord Palmerston, and had proved himself in office the hope and strength of the extreme Liberals, he had never formally shaken off his ties with the party which had originally introduced him to politics. He still represented the University of Oxford; he had removed his name from the Carlton Club only a few months before. But the country clergymen, who composed so large a proportion of his constituents, the country gentlemen, who collected in the ample rooms of the club, were condemning his apostasy. They had at least this in common: they dreaded and denounced Mr. Gladstone.

And in one sense they had good cause for their fears. In 1861 Mr. Gladstone quickly showed that he was determined to enforce the conclusions which had been expressed by Lord Palmerston's resolutions in 1860. Reasons, indeed, there were, for those who chose to look for them, for delay. The heavens had themselves declared against the Chancellor of the Exchequer: 1860 had proved 'a year in which the supply of the fruits of the earth was stinted, and which may be looked upon as one of the severest within the memory of living man.'[2] The resources of the nation had been diminished by the failure of the harvest, and the revenue had suffered from the narrowed

[1] Sir R. Phillimore. See Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii. p. 34.

[2] Mr. Gladstone's own words. *Hansard*, vol. clxii. p. 547.

consumption of comforts and luxuries.[1] The almanac had proved almost as unkind as the weather to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; for, while 1859–60 had been swelled by the produce of the additional day which leap year had given him, 1860–61 not only lost this advantage, but contained an additional Good Friday, and, finally, both commenced and ended on a Sunday. In the long run, days of abstention from business can have no influence on the gross yield of taxation, but at the moment they necessarily affect the payments into the Exchequer, and revenue which would have been otherwise received on the 31st of March falls, if the 31st of March happen to be Sunday, into the receipts of the next financial year.

These things left their mark on the revenue of the year. In the financial year 1859–60 the revenue had amounted to 71,089,000*l.* In the corrected Budget of 1860–61, Mr. Gladstone had expected a revenue of 72,248,000*l.*; the actual sum which he had received was only 70,283,000*l.*,[2] or nearly 2,000,000*l.* less than he had estimated. The result would have been more serious if the expenditure of the year had not been kept within control. The war in China had cost a little less than Mr. Gladstone had anticipated, and the Exchequer was richer by some 822,000*l.* in consequence.[3] But, as the expenditure of the year had exceeded 72,800,000*l.*, and the revenue had not reached 70,300,000*l.*, it followed that the financial year, 1860–61, was closing with a deficit of more than 2,500,000*l.*

These figures might have induced a statesman of more caution and less confidence than Mr. Gladstone to refrain from depriving himself of any of the revenue at

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxii. p. 553.
[2] Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 547, 550.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 546. The expenditure amounted to 72,842,000*l.*, against a final estimate of 73,534,000*l.*

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The Budget of 1861.

his disposal. But they had no such effect on Mr. Gladstone. He was determined to give effect in 1861 to the policy which he had been thwarted in carrying out in 1860; and happily symptoms of improvement and retrenchment of expenditure facilitated his course. The estimated expenditure was again brought within 70,000,000*l.*; the estimated revenue, on the contrary, including an indemnity of 750,000*l.* from China, was placed at 71,823,000*l.*; the estimated surplus, therefore, amounted to very nearly 2,000,000*l.*[1]

With this surplus at his disposal, Mr. Gladstone not only reverted to his proposal of the preceding year for repealing the paper duty, but he endeavoured to conciliate his opponents by concurrently reducing the income tax from 10*d.* to 9*d.* in the pound. He thus paid his court—to quote the imagery of his speech—to the 'two attractive sisters,' direct and indirect taxation—sisters having for their parents 'necessity and invention,' and who differed only as sisters may differ, the one being more free and open, the other more shy, retiring, and insinuating.[2] The change involved a net loss of more than 1,500,000*l.* on the finances of the year, and left Mr. Gladstone with a surplus of rather more than 400,000*l.*

The Budget led to a sharp struggle. Everyone, indeed, welcomed the reduction of the income tax;

[1] The Budget figures were:

Customs	£23,585,000	Debt	£26,180,000
Excise	19,463,000	Consol. Fund	1,930,000
Stamps	8,460,000	Army	15,256,000
Assessed Tax	3,150,000	Navy	12,029,000
Income Tax	11,200,000	China War	1,000,000
Crown Lands	295,000	Civil Service	7,737,000
Miscellaneous	1,400,000	Revenue Departments	4,780,000
	£67,553,000	Packet Service	995,000
Post Office	3,520,000		£69,907,000
Chinese Indemnity	750,000	Or (as Mr. Gladstone put it)	70,000,000
	£71,823,000		

Hansard, vol. clxii. pp. 575-581.

[2] See the passage. *Ibid.*, p. 584.

but many men regretted the repeal of the paper duty. The Conservatives in their hearts disliked a measure whose adoption would inevitably be regarded as the victory of the Commons over the Lords; but even the stoutest Conservatives hardly ventured to allege that their opposition to the proposal was based on these grounds. It was necessary to discover other reasons for their objection to the scheme. Some members—among whom Mr. T. Baring was conspicuous—thought that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was remitting more taxation than the country could afford to spare.[1] Others insisted that, if taxation were to be remitted, Parliament should concentrate its attention on the war tax on tea. The latter alternative, indeed, received the support of the entire Opposition. Mr. Disraeli on the 29th of April announced that Mr. Horsfall, the member for Liverpool, would take the opinion of the House upon it; and Lord Derby, two days later, at a dinner at the Mansion House, hinted that, if Lord Palmerston should, in consequence, lose the services of his Chancellor of the Exchequer, he might remain in office with the support of the Conservative party. This suggestion[2] was consistent enough with the language which Lord Derby had deputed Lord Malmesbury to hold to Lady Palmerston in the previous year. Even Lord Palmerston, however, could not repeat the tactics on which he had ventured in 1860. The very existence of the Government depended on the success of the Budget, and he was forced, for once, to give a genuine support to his brilliant lieutenant. Thus resisted, Mr. Horsfall's amendment was defeated by a small, but

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxii. p. 900; and cf. Mr. Newdegate's amendment, *ibid.*, p. 1387.

[2] For Mr. Disraeli's announcement, *ibid.*, p. 1326; for Lord Derby's speech, *Times*, 2nd of May, 1861. The construction of Lord Derby's speech, which I have given in the text, was placed on it by Lord Hartington. See *Hansard*, vol. clxii. p. 1422.

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sufficient, majority.[1] The rest of the Budget was subsequently agreed to,[2] and the Bill embodying the whole financial arrangements of the year was sent to the House of Lords.

The paper duty repealed.

The situation was a little difficult. A few peers, who found a spokesman in the Duke of Rutland, were anxious to display their consistency by opposing the measure. Lord Derby, however, was too wise, or at any rate in too responsible a position, to venture on a course which would have deprived the Crown of the supplies which it required for conducting the government of the country. Under his advice the Duke consented to withdraw his amendment, and the Lords accepted a measure which they disliked and dared not oppose. Some of them later on enjoyed the barren privilege of recording in writing their protest against a Bill they had not ventured to reject.[3]

The direct result, therefore, of the action of the Lords was to postpone till 1861 the repeal of a duty which would otherwise have been abolished in 1860; but its indirect result was much greater. The Lords had succeeded in showing that they could not resist the declared will of the House of Commons on a financial subject. Though the House of Commons had been almost evenly divided, though a large party in the nation was undoubtedly opposed to the repeal of the duty, and though the Prime Minister himself was of the same mind as his nominal opponents, it was seen that a struggle between the two Houses on a financial subject could only be suffered to end in one way. If, therefore, the Lords in 1860 secured a temporary victory, they paid for it in 1861 by a loss of power. The Commons had invented a new way, or revived an

[1] By 299 votes to 281. *Hansard*, vol. clxii. p. 1469.

[2] The struggle on the paper duties was renewed on the Bill, and their repeal was only carried by 296 votes to 281. *Ibid.*, vol. clxiii. p. 339.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 1166.

old method,[1] of enforcing their decisions; and it was, perhaps, open for some of them to think that the expedient which had compelled the Lords to yield to them was applicable to other subjects than mere measures of finance.

In the years which had so far passed, in the Budgets which he had so far prepared since the formation of Lord Palmerston's Ministry, Mr. Gladstone had been fighting not merely his avowed opponents, but his nominal colleagues. In 1859 he had encouraged Mr. Cobden's negotiations when his colleagues looked with coldness on commercial treaties and on unofficial negotiators. In 1860 he had been almost alone in resisting the excessive expenditure on which the Prime Minister was insisting, and he had received no real support from the Cabinet in his great struggle with the Lords. In 1861 he had carried a Budget which Lord Palmerston could not oppose, but which he did not wholly approve. From 1862 downwards, however, he was no longer in a position of acute antagonism with his chief. Lord Palmerston was beginning to appreciate that the financial reforms which his brilliant lieutenant was inaugurating formed the chief achievement of his Ministry; and, though his old feelings to Mr. Gladstone never changed, he was compelled by the force of events to yield him a free hand, and to give him a more loyal support.[2]

The alteration in Mr. Gladstone's position.

The change in Mr. Gladstone's position was, moreover, accentuated by an alteration in popular feeling. The whole tone and temper of Parliament were modified.

The alteration in the feelings of the country.

[1] The method by which the Paper Duty Bill was carried bears a close resemblance to the method by which Nottingham in the eighteenth century had endeavoured to carry the Occasional Conformity Bill by 'tacking' it to the Land Tax Redemption Bill. See Lecky, *Hist. of England*, vol. i. pp. 37, 93.

[2] In 1864, however, Lord Palmerston addressed a strong protest to Mr. Gladstone against a speech which he had made at Manchester on the subject of the franchise. Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii. p. 128.

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The panic fear of France which Lord Ellenborough and Sir Charles Napier had done so much to excite, and which Lord Palmerston had done so much to sustain, had disappeared. In 1862 the danger of a rupture with the United States had obliterated the recollection of French ambition and French preparations. The knowledge that the French Government had used its influence to induce the authorities at Washington to yield to the demands of this country for the release of the emissaries, who had been forcibly taken from a British mail steamer,[1] and that it had placed some of its stores at the disposal of the British War Office,[2] furnished a conclusive answer to the reasoning of the alarmists, who had persuaded the country that the Emperor was only waiting for a safe opportunity for a rupture. The battle between the Merrimac and the Monitor, moreover, to which allusion has been already made, was inducing a belief that the fortifications on which Lord Palmerston had laid so much stress two years before were valueless, and that the first duty of patriotism was to launch a fleet of ironclad vessels. The heavy expense of successive Budgets, swollen by hostilities in China, the despatch of troops to Canada, and a vote of 250,000*l.*, which Lord Palmerston succeeded at the close of the Session of 1861 in extracting from 'an appalled House of Commons'[3] for the purpose of building iron ships, increased the prevailing dissatisfaction. The grave condition of the manufacturing districts, where a whole people, deprived of the supplies of cotton, were condemned to enforced idleness, seeking work and finding none except that which the charity of the nation devised for them, increased the prevalent desire for

[1] The incident of the Trent will be related in a succeeding chapter. See Chap. viii. vol. ii.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. clxv. p. 407; and cf. *Cobden's Political Writings*, vol. ii. p. 422.

[3] The expression is Mr. Disraeli's. *Hansard*, vol. clxvii. p. 342.

economy. The condition of the revenue, which both in 1860–61 and in 1861–62[1] failed to meet the expenditure, gave a new reason for retrenchment. Economy was as popular in 1861 and 1862 as extravagance had proved in 1859 and 1860.

In moments of extravagance men pay little attention to pounds; in periods of economy they occupy themselves with pence.[2] Retrenchment in the early sixties could only be secured by large and comprehensive measures; but the House of Commons in 1862 endeavoured to obtain it by refusing its sanction to expenditure for particular objects. It rejected proposals for the removal of the Natural History Museum from Bloomsbury to South Kensington, and for the construction of new law courts in the Strand. It even insisted on using an old road, instead of making a new approach to the exhibition which was about to be opened in South Kensington.[3] The country, it was argued, could not afford expensive luxuries of this kind. It was in the position of a country gentleman, who had exhausted his resources on the turf, and found himself, in consequence, unable to build new and necessary farmhouses for his deserving tenants.

Mr. Gladstone regarded the extravagance of the previous years with different feelings from the fitful

[1] In 1860–61, Mr. Gladstone's original Budget estimates had been upset by the expenditure on the war in China. *Ante*, p. 365. His figures in 1861–62 were similarly falsified by the great expense which was incurred in the despatch of troops to Canada, after the incident of the Trent, and by the shrinkage of the revenue which resulted from the American War. He again found himself with a large deficit at the end of the year. Mr. Disraeli described the situation in one of the many financial debates of the Session of 1862 in the words, 'No surplus, enormous and continuous deficits for the last two years; utter exhaustion of all extraordinary aids.' *Hansard*, vol. clxvi. p. 1864.

[2] Mr. Gladstone wrote to Mr. Cobden of the period of extravagance: 'I speak the literal truth when I say that it is more difficult in these days to save a shilling than to spend a million.' Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii. p. 37.

[3] The Courts of Justice (Money) Bill was thrown out by 83 votes to 81. *Hansard*, vol. clxvi. p. 826. The British Museum Bill by 163 votes to 71. *Ibid.*, p. 1932. For the debate on the new road across the Park, see *ibid.*, vol. clxv. p. 1128.

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impatience which induced the ordinary member of Parliament to refuse money for a new museum or new law courts. He was profoundly impressed with the conviction that excessive expenditure was exhausting the resources of the nation, and he felt genuine alarm at the growth of the burden on the taxpayer. In eight years the Imperial expenditure had grown from 56,000,000*l.* to 72,000,000*l.*, the local expenditure from 16,000,000*l.* to 18,000,000*l.* Thus the total expenditure of the country had grown by nearly 20,000,000*l.* in eight years. And he continued in a passage which is worth preserving:

'Let us think for a moment what is the meaning of these few last words and figures. What are the annual savings of the country? May we take them at 50,000,000*l.*? Enormous as that sum is, I believe it may be taken as the amount which the skill, and the capital, and the industry of England may be computed to lay by every year. If it be so, and if we take this 50,000,000*l.* for a period of eight years, we get a total capital of 400,000,000*l.* Now if we put upon that sum of 400,000,000*l.*, taking all kinds of investments together, an interest of 5 per cent., the result is that it gives us 20,000,000*l.* as the aggregate result of the whole savings of the nation for eight years, so that the total saving of the nation for these eight years appears to have been completely absorbed and swallowed up in the grave of this vast expenditure.'[1]

The Budget of 1862.

Thus thinking, Mr. Gladstone resolutely set himself to the promotion of economy; but, while it is easy to increase the expenditure of a nation, it is a much more difficult thing to arrest its growth. In 1862, Mr. Gladstone was able to effect but little. In introducing

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxii. pp. 568, 569. From the best evidence I can obtain I am inclined to think that in this remarkable passage Mr. Gladstone slightly understated the savings of the nation.

the Budget he created some sensation by declaring that the revenue at his disposal was barely sufficient to cover the expenditure for which he had to provide. The country required rest before he could address himself to fresh financial reforms; and Mr. Gladstone, though he made some minor changes, attempted no heroic policy in 1862.[1] For a season, at any rate, he was contented to mark time.

Motions for economy.

Marking time is, however, only a dull occupation; and the House of Commons, having recovered from the fever which had produced extravagance, was bent on the economy which seemed the natural result of a fall of temperature. Mr. Stansfeld, who represented Halifax and who was closely associated with the more extreme Liberals, gave notice of a motion affirming that the national expenditure was capable of reduction without compromising the safety, the independence, or the influence of the country. Mr. Stansfeld's action led to the insertion on the notice paper of a little crop of amendments to his motion; and the Prime Minister himself thought the occasion worthy of his interference, and decided to ask the House to declare that it was impressed with the necessity of economy, that it was at the same time mindful of its obligation to provide for

[1] The original Budget figures were:

Customs	£23,550,000	Debt	£26,280,000
Excise	18,340,000	Consol. Fund	1,900,000
Stamps	8,625,000	Army, &c.	16,000,000
Assessed Taxes	3,180,000	Navy	11,800,000
Income Tax	10,000,000	Civil Service	7,890,000
Post Office	3,650,000	Revenue Departments	4,754,000
Crown Lands	300,000	Packet Service	916,000
Miscellaneous	2,275,000	China	500,000
Chinese Indemnity	170,000		
	£70,090,000		£70,040,000

Hansard, vol. clxvi. pp. 456, 460. Mr. Gladstone made slight alterations in the wine duties and in brewers' licences. These changes did not materially affect his figures. *Ibid.*, pp. 474–480 (*e*). By some reductions in the Miscellaneous estimates the charges of the year were ultimately reduced to 70,000,000*l.*, and the estimated revenue was eventually placed at 70,180,000*l.* *Hansard*, vol. clxvii. p. 126.

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the security of the country at home and the protection of its interests abroad, that it observed with satisfaction the decrease which had already been effected in the national expenditure, and that it trusted that 'such further diminution might be made therein as the future state of things might warrant.'[1] The Conservative party not unnaturally met to consider what course their leader should take in the new crisis, and they decided to amend the latter part of Lord Palmerston's resolution by expressing a hope that 'the attention of the Government would be earnestly directed to the accomplishment of such further reduction . . . as may not only equalise the revenue and expenditure, but may also afford the means of diminishing the burthen of those taxes which are confessedly of a temporary and exceptional character.'[2] The amendment was entrusted to Mr. Spencer Walpole,[3] one of the two men whose retirement from the Ministry of 1858 had done much to precipitate the fall of Lord Derby's Government. Mr. Walpole had already gained one conspicuous success in the Session of 1862. He had formulated a series of resolutions condemning the chief points in the Code which Mr. Lowe had drawn up for the regulation of elementary education, and had compelled the Government practically to substitute his own educational policy for their scheme. It was, perhaps, too much to expect that the Ministry would accept a second dictation from the same hand. At any rate, Lord Palmerston at once announced that he should regard the acceptance by the House of Mr. Walpole's amendment as an expression of want of confidence in the Government. The declaration altered the situation. Mr. Walpole declined to persevere with an amendment whose acceptance would be followed by

Mr. Spencer Walpole's amendment withdrawn.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxvii. p. 293.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] Mr. Walpole does not seem to have attended the meeting at which the amendment was drawn up. *Ibid.*, p. 389.

consequences which he would deplore; and Lord Palmerston's courage turned a situation, full of danger to his Ministry, into one of personal triumph to himself.[1]

Thus the blow which Mr. Disraeli had intended to inflict on the Government was not pressed home by his lieutenant; but some of the good which had been expected to result from the adoption, ensued from the failure, of Mr. Walpole's motion. Thenceforward, and till their own return to office, the Conservative party was pledged to a policy of economy. To do him justice, such a policy was no new thing for their gifted leader to recommend to his party and his country. In 1861 he had reminded the House that the income tax was 'a more powerful engine than any armament that can be devised, more powerful than fleets and armies,'[2] and that it was consequently wiser to keep this tax in reserve than to apply it to forging new weapons of offence; and in 1862 he had denounced 'the bloated armaments' which the Government was sanctioning, and had insisted that they could only lead to rival armaments, and ultimately to European war.[3]

Mr. Disraeli was, however, only giving expression to a general conviction. The change of thought which had taken place in two years was too obvious to require emphasising. The House of Commons in 1862 was

[1] Mr. Walpole was severely criticised for yielding before Lord Palmerston's threat. Mr. Disraeli complained (it was the eve of the Derby) of his favourite bolting. *Hansard*, vol. clxvii. p. 354.

[2] 'There is nothing influences the opinion of foreign States with regard to this country more than the consciousness that such is its wealth that our Sovereign can, by appealing to one single tax, raise annually an amount that other Governments can only acquire by costly loans. . . . Such an engine as the income tax is to a Minister of this country more powerful than any armament that can be devised, more powerful than fleets and armies.' *Ibid.*, vol. clxii. pp. 1315 and 1316.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. clxvi. p. 1422. The phrase 'bloated' armaments was at once noted by Lord Palmerston (*ibid.*, p. 1429), and was frequently quoted. I write under correction, but I think that the phrase was struck out of the copy of the speech which was revised for publication in *Hansard*.

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almost as eager to cut down expenditure on fortifications as it had been to sanction it in 1860. In 1860, Lord Ellenborough's trumpet eloquence had roused the country to consent to a vast warlike expenditure. In 1862, Lord Ellenborough, eager as ever for more forts, docks, and ships, but hopeless of making headway against the general feeling of the people, was urging the Emperor to set a good example to Europe by beginning the work of disarmament.[1] Lord Palmerston, indeed, succeeded, by using his personal influence, in procuring acceptance for a further loan; but he only obtained a narrow majority of eight votes for completing the useless works at Alderney,[2] and thought himself compelled in consequence to introduce considerable modifications into his original plan. The construction of the forts at Spithead was postponed;[3] and many other works were reduced or abandoned.[4] The House suddenly realised that the safety of this country depended on the command of the sea, and that Lord Palmerston's doctrine that steam had bridged the Channel and reduced the powers of defence was the delusion of an old man, who had grown up amid the traditions of another generation, and had never appreciated the advantages which the industry and wealth of manufacturing England had conferred on the country in both peace and war.

The finances of 1863-1866.

The permanent consequences of this change of thought were still more surprising. For four more years Mr. Gladstone was to be responsible for the finances of the country, and in those years the common sense of a House of Commons, free from unreasonable panic, enabled him to make considerable reductions in the national expenditure. The exact nature of these

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxviii. pp. 798, 807.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. clxvi. p. 1860.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. clxvii. p. 879.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 1246.

reductions will be found in a footnote.[1] As their result the expenditure of the country was reduced in these four years from rather more than 70,000,000*l.* to a little more than 66,000,000*l.*, or by 4,000,000*l.*; seven-eighths of this great saving was effected in the army and navy estimates, and hardly a voice was raised either in Parliament or out of doors against these successive retrenchments.

Retrenchment in expenditure, and the prosperity to which these retrenchments led, enabled Mr. Gladstone to make large reductions in taxation. The sugar duties were reduced in 1864 by sums amounting to from 5*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* 4*d.* the cwt. The duties on tea were reduced in 1863 from 1*s.* 5*d.* to 1*s.*, and in 1865 from 1*s.* to 6*d.* per lb. The income tax was reduced in 1863 from 9*d.* to 7*d.*, in 1864 from 7*d.* to 6*d.*, and in 1865 from 6*d.* to 4*d.* in the pound. The duties on fire insurance were reduced in 1865 from 3*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* on each 100*l.* insured, and in 1866 considerable reductions were made in the taxes on pepper, wood, wine, stage carriages, and post horses. The relief which was

[1] Expenditure estimated in Budgets 1862, 1863, 1864, 1865, 1866:

—	1862	1863	1864	1865	1866
	£	£	£	£	£
Debt	26,280,000	26,330,000	26,400,000	26,350,000	26,140,000
Consol. Fund.	1,900,000	1,940,000	1,930,000	1,900,000	1,880,000
Army, &c.	16,000,000	15,060,000	14,844,000	14,348,000	14,095,000
Navy	11,800,000	10,736,000	10,432,000	10,392,000	10,400,000
Civil Service	7,890,000	7,692,000[1]	7,628,000	7,650,000	7,886,000
Revenue Depts.	4,754,000	4,721,000	4,692,000	4,657,000	5,003,000
Packet Services	916,000	1,270,000[1]	883,000	842,000	821,000
China	500,000	—	—	—	—
Reserve for any increase in Estimates	—	—	81,000	—	—
	70,040,000	67,749,000	66,890,000	66,139,000	66,225,000

[1] At the time at which the Budget of 1863 was produced, the Packet estimates and the Civil Service estimates were not finally completed. Mr. Gladstone took the sum of 1,270,000*l.* for the Packet Service and for any additional Civil Service votes which might be required.

Hansard, vol. clxvi. p. 460. *Ibid.*, vol. clxx. p. 220, vol. clxxiv. p. 562, vol. clxxviii. p. 1103, vol. clxxxiii. p. 374.

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afforded to the country by these changes far exceeded the loss which was sustained by the Exchequer, for it is with taxation as it was with the golden tree of the ancients—

> primo avulso non deficit alter
> Aureus.

The people in effect were relieved by these great Budgets from taxation amounting to more than 13,000,000*l.* a year.[1]

The results of Mr. Gladstone's finance.

The success of these great Budgets raised the reputation of Mr. Gladstone to an extraordinary extent. Even in 1862 Mr. Cobden declared that there was no doubt that he had 'been the very breath of the nostrils of the present Administration for the past two years. What'—so he went on—'keeps the party together, and excites any confidence in the Government on the part of those who represent the large constituencies, and who alone can give any solidity to a Ministry, Whig or Liberal? Why, their faith in the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There is no doubt that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer went out of the Government, it must break up within a fortnight.'[2] And the success of his Chancellorship, two years later, received a still more striking testimonial; for, when the foreign policy of the Government brought it to the very brink of disaster,

[1] The relief was as follows:

By 2*d.* in the Income Tax, 1863	£2,750,000
„ 1*d.* „ 1864	1,230,000
„ 2*d.* „ 1865	2,600,000
„ reduction of Tea Duties from 1*s.* 5*d.* to 1*s.*, 1863	1,641,000
„ reduction of Tea Duties from 1*s.* to 6*d.*, 1865	2,215,000
„ „ Sugar Duties, 1864	1,738,000
„ „ Fire Insurance Duties, 1864	255,000
„ „ „ „ 1865	520,000
„ changes in 1866	601,000
	£13,550,000

Statistical Abstracts.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. clxvili. p. 170.

Lord Palmerston attempted to divert attention from Denmark to the financial policy which he had done at the time so little to support, but of which, in 1864, he was ready to take due share of credit. 'We have reduced the taxation of the country by 12,000,000*l.* . . . A commercial treaty has been negotiated between France and England, which has wonderfully increased the mercantile relations of the two countries. The expenditure has been diminished by 3,000,000*l.* odd.' And no one reminded him that he himself had used his influence to defeat the repeal of the paper duty; that he had declared that it was inexpedient that 'England should enter into a treaty of commerce with any foreign state;'[1] and that he had been the chief obstacle to that very reduction of expenditure for which he took credit in 1864. It was Mr. Gladstone's genius that redeemed the domestic policy of Lord Palmerston's long Administration from the charge of barrenness; it was Mr. Gladstone's influence that engrafted some liberal reforms on the policy of the most Conservative of Prime Ministers.

The fruits of Mr. Gladstone's policy may be seen at a glance. The trade of the United Kingdom, which had risen from 268,000,000*l.* in 1854 to 375,000,000*l.* in 1860, or by about 17,000,000*l.* a year, rose to 534,000,000*l.* in 1866, or by more than 26,000,000*l.* annually. In twelve years the volume of trade, measured by its value, had actually doubled; and the accelerated impulse which had been given to trade during the latter portion of the period had been imparted to it at a time when the chief British industry had been paralysed by the American Civil War,[2] and

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clv. p. 213.

[2] The quantity of raw cotton imported decreased from 12,419,096 cwt. in 1860 to 4,678,333 cwt. in 1863; the price of United States cotton rose from 3*l.* 0*s.* 4*d.* to 11*l.* 5*s.* 8*d.* in the same period.

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when Ireland had suffered severely from a series of bad harvests.[1]

The proposal to tax charities.

A detail of the great financial results which followed Mr. Gladstone's administration of the Exchequer from 1859 to 1866, would be incomplete if no reference were made to two proposals which he brought forward in the same period: one of which led to a signal reverse, the other to an astonishing benefit. In framing the Budget of 1863, Mr. Gladstone seems to have been struck by the circumstance that 'property 'held in 'mortmain, held in the hands of corporate bodies, or under trust for charitable purposes,' contributed nothing to the general taxation of the country. Such an arrangement seemed to Mr. Gladstone essentially unjust. It is impossible to exempt A from taxation without increasing to a corresponding extent the burden upon B, C, D, and the other letters of the alphabet; and, as corporate bodies and charitable trusts participate in the advantages which ensue from law and order, it is only reasonable that they should bear their share of supporting the system from which they derive these benefits. But there were other reasons which told more strongly in the same direction. There was no doubt that the pecuniary benefits which many great charities—Mr. Gladstone specially instanced St. Bartholomew's Hospital—had derived from the fiscal changes of the last few years[2] had far more than outweighed any loss which the extension of the income tax

[1] Mr. Gladstone, in introducing the Budget of 1863, said that the value of the oat crop, the wheat crop, the potato crop, and one-third of the total value of the live stock in Ireland had fallen from more than 39,000,000*l.* in 1856 to 27,000,000*l.* in 1862–63. He assumed for the purpose of the calculation that one-third of the total value of the live stock represented the annual return from such stock. *Hansard*, vol. clxx. p. 208.

[2] Mr. Gladstone put the saving to St. Bartholomew's Hospital from the reduction of taxation on food, drugs, clothing &c. at 1,867*l.* a year, or more than double the amount of the income tax, which he contended that the hospital should pay. *Hansard*, vol. clxx. p. 1096.

to their endowments would have imposed on them. There was no doubt, moreover, that other charities—Mr. Gladstone instanced Christ's Hospital—which had originally been founded for the benefit of 'the poor fatherless and motherless children, the sick, the sore, and the impotent,' were now chiefly reserved for the comparatively prosperous; and that the governors were ready to pay large sums for their governorships for the sake of the very advantageous patronage which they thereby secured. 'No man would dare to stand at this table and ask the House to vote 5,000*l.* or 500*l.* or even 5*l.* a year for such an institution.'[1] Why, then, should the House indirectly do the same thing by exempting its huge income of 70,000*l.* a year from its due share of the national burdens? And there were other charities—like Jarvis's Charity, or Smith's Charity, which, so far from being engaged on a work of beneficence or education, were creating pauperism, and discouraging independence and thrift.[2] How could these charities, so baneful in their operation, be justly exempted from their due share of the burdens of the State? It is needless, however, to multiply the illustrations which Mr. Gladstone used in the great speech delivered in defence of his proposal. The argument of that speech was unanswered and was probably unanswerable. But the man who employed it was forced on the very same

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxx. p. 1091.

[2] Mr. Jarvis, who died in 1793, left 100,000*l.* to be given in various ways, physic, food, clothes, &c., to the poor of three Hertfordshire parishes. The population of these parishes increased from 860 in 1801 to 1,222 in 1851. 'What [asked Mr. Gladstone] was the reason of this increase of population? Had employment increased there? No. Had manufactures been established? No. Were wages higher in these parishes? No; they were lower by 2*s.* a week. Were the dwellings good? No; they were the most miserable and scandalous that disgraced any part of the country. The people went into them naturally enough to wait for the doles, for the gifts which by Jarvis's mistaken and misguided benevolence were distributed to them, and which pretty nearly doubled the income of the agricultural population of those parishes.' *Hansard*, vol. clxx. p. 1087. For Smith's Charity, see *ibid.*, p. 1100.

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evening to abandon his project. For, though no one could answer Mr. Gladstone's reasoning, no one rose to support his proposal. Men on both sides of the House, with whom sentiment counted for much, and argument for little, deprecated the taxation of charities. The abuses which Mr. Gladstone had pointed out, were as nothing weighed with the fact that most men were interested in some little charity which would have suffered, to some extent, from the adoption of the plan.[1]

The proposal abandoned.

If Mr. Gladstone failed in securing the success of this proposal, he accomplished a reform which, perhaps, has done as much to promote the happiness of the country as the abolition of protective duties and the provision of cheap food; for he decided, in 1861, to place the machinery of the Post Office at the disposition of the people for the promotion of thrift. The idea was not altogether new. In a rude and imperfect shape, it had occurred to Mr. Whitbread in the earlier years of the nineteenth century, and had been revived fifty years afterwards by Mr. Sikes of Huddersfield; but it was Mr. Gladstone's good fortune to convert an abstract idea into a concrete fact; to do for the post office savings bank what Mr. Stephenson had done for the locomotive—to give form and substance to a conception which had not previously assumed a practical shape.

The institution of post office savings banks.

The scheme which Mr. Gladstone brought forward commended itself by its simplicity. Briefly stated, anyone was allowed to deposit at a post office, authorised to undertake savings bank business, a shilling or any multiple of a shilling subject to the provision that the aggregate deposits of a depositor should not exceed 30*l.* in any one year; or 150*l.* at any one time. A halfpenny a month on a sovereign represents an interest of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. a year. By a stroke of genius interest

[1] The student who wishes to find a clear example of Mr. Gladstone's instructed eloquence, will find him at his very best in this great speech.

was paid on each complete pound remaining at the credit of the depositor for an entire month. The most uninstructed depositor could easily understand this simple arrangement; for each sovereign left with the post office for a period of twelve months became automatically 1*l.* 0*s.* 6*d.* As Consols in 1861 bore interest at the rate of 3 per cent., and as Consols could be bought below par, Mr. Gladstone assumed—and as the event showed rightly assumed—that, if the funds of the depositors were invested in Consols, the difference between the interest earned and the interest paid would cover the cost of management.

In devising this scheme, moreover, Mr. Gladstone effected another object besides the promotion of thrift. To use his own language, he provided the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a strong financial arm, and secured his independence of the City by giving him a large and certain command of money.[1] This result may, no doubt, from one point of view, be subjected to criticism; but it is characteristic of the completeness with which Mr. Gladstone dealt with a great subject, that, in accomplishing one object, he should incidentally have secured another.

The Bill which Mr. Gladstone introduced in February was passed in May 1861, and in the following September the Post Office commenced its operations.[2] Before the end of 1862, 180,000 accounts had been opened, and the balance due to depositors amounted to nearly one million and three-quarters. Since that time the deposits have swollen with each successive year. At the end of 1871, when the scheme had been ten years in operation,

[1] Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii. p. 122.

[2] Mr. Gladstone's scheme was introduced on the 8th of February, 1861. *Hansard*, vol. clxi. p. 262. For the debate on the second reading, see *ibid.*, pp. 2189–2196, and for the second reading in the House of Lords, *ibid.*, vol. clxii. p. 880. There is an excellent 'History of the Development of the Post Office Savings Bank' in the *Forty-third Report of the Postmaster-General* (1897), p. 32 *et seq.*

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the amount due to depositors exceeded 17,000,000*l.*; in 1881, 36,000,000*l.*; in 1891, 71,000,000*l.*; in 1901, 140,000,000*l.* The remarkable feature of these figures is that they show that the business has doubled in each ten years; it was twice as large in 1871 as in 1861; in 1881 as in 1871; in 1891 as in 1881; and in 1901 as in 1891. Their significance may be further shown if they be compared with the equally remarkable growth of the passenger traffic on the railways of the United Kingdom. The passengers carried increased in the forty years from 1861 to 1901 from 170,000,000 to (nearly) 1,200,000,000. If they had increased with the growth of deposits in the savings banks, they would have reached in 1901 2,700,000,000.

Encouraged by the success of this great scheme, Mr. Gladstone, in 1864, decided on supplementing it with another enabling the Government to use the machinery of the Post Office for effecting small life assurances up to the limit of 100*l.* and for granting immediate and deferred annuities. To a certain extent this power was not new. The Government was already authorised to insure lives up to 100*l.*, but the power was limited by the requirement that the person who effected the insurance should also purchase a deferred annuity.[1] The proposal to remove this distinction, and to enable the Government to insure lives, and to issue annuities without any such insurance, aroused one of those storms of passion which it was Mr. Gladstone's fate so frequently to excite. Men interested in insurance offices declared that the measure would ruin the existing offices;[2] men interested in friendly societies declared that it would interfere with private trade and private enterprise.[3] Stung by their criticism, Mr. Gladstone was compelled to defend the measure in one of those great speeches which, if they were forgotten after his death, had the effect of mould-

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxxiii. p. 479. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 1527. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 1555.

ing opinion and destroying opposition in his lifetime. Exposing the defects of the smaller insurance companies and the deficits of many friendly societies, he urged that in the interest of the working classes means should be found to enable them to insure their lives and purchase their annuities with the confident knowledge that the bargain would be fulfilled.[1] In consequence of this speech the opinion of the public turned with favour to the proposals of the Bill, and a measure, which at one time seemed unlikely to be successful, was carried without material amendment through all its stages.

In the course of the same Ministry, Mr. Gladstone introduced another reform, which perhaps few persons have ever appreciated, but which has given Parliament a control over the public expenditure which it had never previously been able to exercise.

The Exchequer and Audit Act.

From a very early period in our parliamentary history the House of Commons perceived the necessity of ascertaining that the moneys which they granted to the Crown were spent on the services to which they had been appropriated. Audit, in fact, followed immediately upon appropriation. But in the lax system of the eighteenth century the control which was thus instituted was slackened, and Parliament had practically no machinery for following the grants which it periodically made. In 1832, however, Sir James Graham, as First Lord of the Admiralty, introduced a measure authorising the Commissioners of Audit to compare the accounts and vouchers of naval expenditure with the votes and estimates for the naval service, and to report the results of their inquiry to the House of Commons.[2] In 1846 the check which was thus established was applied to the military expenditure,[3] and

[1] See the speech in *Hansard*, vol. clxxiii. p. 1550.

[2] 2 & 3 William IV., c. 40, sect. 30.

[3] 9 & 10 Vict., c. 92.

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between 1860 and 1866 these arrangements were extended to the whole of the civil expenditure.[1]

In the meanwhile two much more important steps had been concurrently taken. In 1861, Mr. Gladstone, in accordance with the recommendation of a committee which had sat a few years before, obtained the appointment of a Public Accounts Committee 'for the examination from year to year of the audited accounts of the public expenditure;'[2] and in 1866 he carried the principle of examination one step farther by abolishing the Controllership of the Exchequer, by combining the old Exchequer and Audit Departments, and by making the Comptroller and Auditor General, who became the head of the new consolidated department, independent of Treasury control.[3]

The effect of these changes was remarkable. Our ancestors had endeavoured to institute a check upon issues, and had made the Comptroller of the Exchequer responsible for the due issues of public moneys. Mr. Gladstone's reforms, on the contrary, were based on the principle that 'it is the business of the House of Commons to be responsible not only for the inception of all public expenditure, but also to follow the money raised by taxation until the last farthing is accounted for.'[4] He obtained this result by referring all public accounts to an independent auditor; by directing the auditor to compare the accounts with the estimates, and to report fully the result of his examination to Parliament. Finally, he secured the effective inquiry into the result of the auditor's reports by the appointment of the Committee on Public Accounts. The investigations of that committee insure that this, the special duty of the House of Commons, shall not be neglected, but that a

[1] See Todd's *Parliamentary Government*, original edition, vol. ii. p. 59.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. clxii. p. 318.

[3] 29 & 30 Vict., c. 39.

[4] *Hansard*, vol. cxcvii. p. 633.

tribunal expressly constituted for the task shall annually examine the national accounts.[1]

Concluding summary.

The analysis of the financial policy of Lord Palmerston's second Administration, which it has been the special object of this chapter to supply, may probably suggest many reflections to the thoughtful student. The beginning of the period was remarkable for extravagance, which was suggested by panic; at the end of it economy, or even parsimony, was popular. But, both at the beginning and at the end of it, Mr. Gladstone was in favour of the economical administration on which he saw that the prosperity of the country was largely dependent. In the earlier years of the Ministry he risked the inconvenience of defeat, and the unpopularity which attaches to direct taxation, to promote the great measure of free trade, the crown of the edifice, whose foundation had been laid by Sir Robert Peel in 1842. In the later years of his Administration he availed himself of the surpluses with which the growing prosperity of the people had provided him, and which his own financial policy had done so much to increase, to reduce the pressure of taxation on all classes of the community. These measures have earned him an enduring place in that small company of great financiers who have presided over the Exchequer of England. But the fame of these achievements should not blind us to the fact that he proved the extent of his knowledge and the sincerity of his convictions by giving the House of Commons, for the first time in its history, machinery for exercising an effective control over the right appropriation of public moneys. Eight millions of depositors should also remember with gratitude that they owe to Mr. Gladstone

[1] There is an elaborate discussion of this reform in Todd's *Parliamentary Government*, original edition, vol. ii. p. 564 *seq.*; and cf. revised edition, vol. ii. pp. 236–271.

CHAP. V. 1859–65. the conversion of the Post Office into a great savings bank, and the introduction of the most efficient machinery for the encouragement of thrift that the world had ever seen or the imagination of man had ever conjectured.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

CHAPTER VI.

POLAND AND DENMARK.

The feelings aroused in England by the formation of a united Italy.

THE formation of an Italian kingdom, which has been traced in another chapter, created extraordinary enthusiasm in this country. The people of England sympathised with a nation which in ancient Europe had played so great a part in history, and which in modern Europe had rendered so enduring a service to literature and art. All that nature had done for Italy added to the interest which the travelled Englishman felt in its fortunes; all that man had done for it increased the pleasure which the cultured Englishman felt in its resurrection. The land which had produced a Cæsar in the past, which had given birth to a Cavour in the present, the land of Virgil and Lucretius, of Dante and Boccaccio, of Raphael and Michael Angelo, had gained the freedom and independence which it deserved.

Yet, amid the general pleasure which was almost universally felt in England at events which had freed Italian soil from the foreigner, and had extended the reign of liberty in Europe, some few men saw cause for anxiety. They could not wholly approve the methods by which Italy had secured her freedom. The conspiracy of Plombières, the armed intervention of France, the tacit support by the Piedmontese Government of Garibaldi's expedition to Sicily, the invasion of the Romagna: these things, however desirable in their consequences, were opposed to the arrangements which, rightly or wrongly, had received the sanction of Europe.

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The peace of the world seemed to these men to depend on the maintenance of the treaties of 1815; and nothing that had happened since 1815, neither the separation of Belgium from Holland, nor even the institution of the Second Empire, had struck so fatal a blow at these treaties as the extrusion of Austria from the Italian peninsula.

The precedent, moreover, which had been set in Italy, was felt to be capable of wider application. The dreamer in the Tuileries, who was still apparently the leading factor in Continental politics, was avowedly basing his policy elsewhere on the principles which he had applied to Italy. Race, religion, and geography were, in his view, to supersede treaty rights, and the map of Europe was to be brought into accord with the new doctrine of nationalities. In developing these ideas Napoleon was, no doubt, partly influenced by a desire to find reasons for the extension of his own Empire; for was not Belgium allied to France in race, religion, and language? and was not the Rhine the boundary which nature had apparently assigned to French dominion? But the arguments which he thus used were obviously capable of application to other countries. A more far-sighted man than Napoleon III. might have seen that they might possibly be employed in the future in quite other interests than those in which he used them. Capable French statesmen were already complaining that he was erecting a new Prussia behind the Alps. They were soon to learn that he had set in drift a movement which was gradually to convert the King of Prussia into the Emperor of Germany.

The position of Prussia.

In the North of Europe, indeed, a condition of things existed which, in some respects, bore a close resemblance to the position of Italy before 1859. Germany, like Italy, was broken up into a number of states; her plains, like those of Italy, had been the

battle-fields of Europe; and her children, like the Italians, were looking forward to unity as the only method of increasing their strength and authority. Just, moreover, as Austria before 1859 had made her influence felt throughout the Italian peninsula, so Austria remained the predominating influence in the German Diet; and just as one Italian kingdom, Piedmont, alone had the power and the courage to assert itself as the champion of the Italian cause, so one German kingdom, Prussia—which Count Rechberg, the Minister of Austria, was already describing as the Piedmont of the North[1]—from its history, its strength, and its position, was capable of becoming a possible champion of German aspirations.

In 1860 no Prussian statesman had realised that the consolidation of Italy was ultimately to lead to the formation of the German Empire. Herr von Schlienitz, indeed, the then head of the Prussian Ministry, had hazarded the observation that the principle of nationalities, which was being applied to Italy, might ultimately be of advantage to his own country; but he was seriously concerned on finding that a remark which he had made in private should have been published in an Italian newspaper.[2] Prussia protested against the conduct of Piedmont in invading the Romagna, and her statesmen paid no heed to the reply of Count Cavour, 'You will thank me one day for having shown you the way in which you yourselves will follow.'[3]

The accession of William I.

While, however, the drama of Italian unity was being played out on the south of the Alps, new actors appeared on the northern stage. In 1858 the Prince, known later as William I., became regent for his brother, Frederick William IV. In 1861, on his

[1] De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iv. p. 491.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 529, 530. Cf. La Marmora, *Un peu plus de Lumière*, p. 26.

[3] Cesaresco's *Cavour*, p. 201.

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brother's death, he became King of Prussia. By training a soldier, the new King resolved to increase the strength of the Prussian army; and his Legislature refused him the means of doing so. The struggle between King and Chamber raged through the summer of 1862; and at last the King, unable to secure the supplies which he required, and unwilling to rule on any other terms, made up his mind to abdicate.

Herr von Bismarck.

While he was still hesitating, a man who was destined to rise to the highest eminence in European politics—Otto von Bismarck—waited on him, and offered to undertake the task from which other men shrank.[1] Even at that time Herr von Bismarck was no novice in politics. He had represented his country at Frankfort, at Vienna, at St. Petersburg, and at Paris. He had occasionally been spoken of as the possible recipient of still more responsible office; but King Frederick William IV., though he recognised his abilities and admired his energy, hesitated to entrust powers to a man whose ideas of government were avowedly based on the use of force. Bismarck—so he wrote on one occasion—was only to be employed when the bayonet governed unrestricted; and the King, who had withdrawn his troops from Berlin during the revolution of 1848, and who tried throughout his reign to live on good terms with his opponents, could not make up his mind to place himself and his fortunes in the hands of such an adviser.

The experiment was, indeed, hazardous. While Herr von Bismarck was still in France he had discussed the situation with M. de Persigny, the most autocratic of Napoleon's advisers. He had agreed with M. de Persigny that, in the contest between the King and the Chamber in Prussia, the Crown should disregard the

[1] See on this point Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. ii. p. 510 *seq.*

decision of the Legislature. If the Chamber refused the supplies which the King demanded for the reconstruction of the army, the King should proceed to reorganise the army without its authority. Certain of the support of the army, in a contest in which its own interests were so deeply concerned, the King of Prussia, so M. de Persigny advised, might safely disregard the decisions of Parliament. No doubt the Minister who adopted such a policy would be assailed with calumny and reproach; but if he saved the State, if he prevented the politicians who dreamed of liberty without understanding its conditions from smothering it in its germ, if he succeeded in sheltering this liberty under the ægis of the Crown, he would be the true Liberal, the only man worthy of the name. He would have founded liberty in Germany.[1]

While these ideas, which M. de Persigny had suggested, and which had found a ready acceptance in his own mind, were still fresh in his memory, Herr von Bismarck placed his services at the disposal of the monarch. He told him frankly that he was ready to carry out the King's policy, whether Parliament agreed to it or not. 'I will rather perish with the King'—such was his strong phrase—'than forsake your Majesty in the contest with parliamentary government.'[2] His bold front induced the King to tear up the proclamation of abdication which he had already drafted, and to resume the struggle from which, a few minutes before, he had resolved to retire in despair.

His autocratic policy.

During the next two years Herr von Bismarck steadily proceeded on the course which M. de Persigny had suggested, and which he had promised the King to follow. He practically set the Legislature at defiance, and carried on the work of strengthening the army.

[1] *Mémoires de Persigny*, pp. 282–288.

[2] *Bismarck, Reflections and Reminiscences*, vol. i. p. 293.

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Germany—so he publicly declared—had a contest before it, which could only be settled by blood and iron; and, in order to secure success, the greatest possible weight of blood and iron must be placed in the hands of the King of Prussia.[1] The Ministry was so convinced of its responsibilities in this respect, he added a little later, that it was determined to carry on the finances of the State 'without the conditions provided for in the Constitution.'[2] In short, the future of Germany was to be worked out by a policy of blood and iron; and to that policy, whether the Legislature agreed with him or not, Herr von Bismarck was determined to adhere.

Such a policy—whatever other consequences it might entail—naturally, at the time, made him the most unpopular man in Prussia. No party in the State could readily forgive a Minister who seemed determined to impose his own will on an unwilling country. The King himself, though he had been ready enough to undertake the contest, was alarmed at the 'thoroughness' with which his Minister was conducting it. 'I can perfectly well see,' so he said to Herr von Bismarck, 'where all this will end. Over there, in front of the Opera House, under my windows, they will cut off your head, and mine a little while afterwards.' 'Sire,' replied Herr von Bismarck, 'we must all die sooner or later, and can we perish more honourably? I fighting for my King's cause, and your Majesty sealing with your own blood your rights as King by the grace of God.'[3] The King, in fact, had secured the services of a Minister who was ready to stake his life on the contest in which he was engaged.

[1] *Bismarck, Reflections and Reminiscences*, vol. i. p. 310.

[2] Jacks, *Life of Bismarck*, p. 149.

[3] *Bismarck, Reflections and Reminiscences*, vol. i. p. 310. M. Ollivier, oddly enough, declares that this conversation took place in June 1866, on the eve of the Prusso-Austrian War. *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. viii. p. 170. But I assume that Prince von Bismarck must have known, and reported accurately, its true date.

The issue of the struggle was still uncertain, and Herr von Bismarck's unpopularity was steadily increasing, when two things occurred in Europe which precipitated the crisis. One of these was an outbreak of insurrection in Poland; the other, the death of Frederick VII., King of Denmark.

The Polish insurrection of 1862.

Insurrection in Poland was, unhappily, no new thing. In the first third of the nineteenth century Europe had been profoundly moved by the heroism with which the Poles had encountered the whole strength of Russia, and by the severity with which they had been crushed by their conquerors. Despair since then had given the country more than twenty years of peace. The accession of a new Czar in 1855 kindled some hopes in the hearts of a despondent people. But the Poles soon found that a change of rulers was not likely to ameliorate their lot. The new Czar did not venture on making any material change in the policy which his predecessor had pursued towards Poland. Five years later the three Sovereigns of Eastern Europe met at Warsaw to discuss the many grave questions with which European diplomatists were concerned in 1860;[1] the Poles resented the presence in their capital of the three potentates whose ancestors had divided Poland among themselves; and a caricature was secretly circulated in Warsaw which represented the monarchs as three vultures fastening on a corpse.

The caricature represented only too accurately the despondency of the Poles; yet, amid the universal feeling of despair, some things afforded a little hope to the bolder spirits of a disconsolate nation. The doctrine of nationalities, which had been proclaimed with so much pomp at Paris, was calculated to encourage

[1] I have not alluded in detail to the Warsaw meeting; as little or nothing was decided at or resulted from the meeting. See, *inter alia*, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. iv. pp. 502–504.

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a nation which was in chains. The claims of Poland seemed at least as strong, her necessities were at least as great, as those of Italy; and it seemed permissible to hope that the Sovereign who had done so much for the cause of nationalities in the South might be disposed to do something for another nationality in the North of Europe. All that seemed requisite, so the Poles thought, was to lay some emphasis on their woes and their aspirations. They might, at least, make a beginning by directing attention to their misfortunes; and attention could be so attracted by celebrating the heroism of the men who, in the past, had shed their blood for their country. The 25th of February was the anniversary of the battle of Grochow. On its eve, in 1861, notices were quietly circulated in Warsaw, urging the people to assemble in the market place and proceed to an adjoining church to pray for the souls of those who had died in the battle. The invitation met with a ready response. The people assembled in their tens of thousands, and, after praying in church, paraded the streets, singing patriotic songs. Demonstrations of this kind might have excited alarm even in London in 1861. In Warsaw, Prince Michael Gortchakoff, the Governor of Poland, who had commanded the Russians in the Crimea,[1] decided on suppressing so dangerous a demonstration. The police were ordered to charge and disperse the crowd, and some forty people were killed or wounded in the charge. On the morrow a new anniversary suggested a fresh demonstration, and led to a fresh suppression. Four days later the bodies of the victims who had fallen in these conflicts were buried, and a procession of 100,000 persons accompanied their remains to the cemetery. The people on this occasion

The first demonstrations.

[1] Prince Michael Gortchakoff must not be confused with Prince Alexander Gortchakoff, who, at this time, held the first place in the Czar's Council Chamber at St. Petersburg.

were suffered quietly to disperse, but from that day they continued to wear the mourning which they had assumed for the ceremony.[1]

These lamentable events drew fresh attention, both at St. Petersburg and in Europe, to the position of Poland. At St. Petersburg, the Czar—to do him justice—endeavoured to adopt a policy of conciliation. Within a month of these disturbances he granted a State council for the separate government of Poland; he conceded municipal institutions both to Warsaw and the larger Polish towns; he allowed the municipal bodies to be popularly elected; and he established deliberative assemblies—the creatures also of popular election—in the several districts of the kingdom.[2] Unfortunately, if he gave freely with one hand, he took away what the people had already with the other. In Poland the most prominent institution was an agricultural society,[3] which contained everyone eminent by birth or position, and had become a veritable representative of Polish life and feeling. The Czar determined, in conceding Liberal institutions, to suppress this society. The boon which he granted was forgotten in regret for the loss of the institution which he repressed; and the people resumed their quiet and apparently purposeless demonstrations. Bewildered at the passive attitude of the population, Prince Gortchakoff asked them what they desired. 'We want our country,' was the unanimous reply. At that moment some one, either by design or by chance, played on a cornet one of the national airs of Poland. The people fell on their knees, and chanted the hymn. The

[1] De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. iv. pp. 416–418. The battle of Grochow was fought on the 20th and renewed on the 25th of February. See *Hist. of England*, vol. iv. p. 272.

[2] De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. iv. p. 419.

[3] For the formation of this society, see *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. vi. p. 61. M. Ollivier's account of the Polish insurrection (*ibid.*, pp. 38–124) is well worth reading, though it enters into details which it seemed unnecessary to reproduce in this narrative. Cf. Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. ii. p. 529 *seq.*

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troops, provoked at this demonstration, fired on the kneeling multitude, of whom some fifty were killed and some hundreds wounded. On the morrow no one ventured in the streets of Warsaw who was not dressed in mourning. The Russians, irritated at the marks of sorrow, attempted to regulate the colours of the dresses which the people should wear; and Prince Gortchakoff, worn out by the anxiety of a situation which he could neither understand nor control, was seized with a melancholy illness. He died a month later, pursued in his death struggle by visions of women in mourning calling for the restitution of their country.[1]

The continuance of the demonstrations.

During the rest of 1861 these strange demonstrations of discontent, which it was hardly possible to dignify with the name of insurrection, continued to perplex the rulers of Russia. On one occasion, towards the end of the year, the people, collected in the churches to celebrate the anniversary of Kosciusko's death, refused to separate when the religious rites were over. The troops, who had been assembled to disperse the crowds on their leaving the churches, were paralysed by their conduct, and for some seventeen hours the Russians stood to their arms outside, while the people without food remained within, the sanctuaries. After these long hours of weary watching, the troops, losing patience, entered the churches, arrested some two thousand of these passive insurgents and threw them into the citadel. The officer who gave the order for their arrest was blamed by the authorities for an unnecessary act of severity, and committed suicide;[2] but his death did not remove the impression which his action had created, and the sullen discontent of the Poles drove the Russians

[1] De la Gorce, vol. iv. pp. 419, 420.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 421. There were some debates in Parliament in 1862 and 1863 on the Polish question which are worth referring to. *Hansard*, vol. clxvi. pp. 3, 539, 554, and vol. clxix. pp. 560, 879. See especially Lord Carnarvon's speech and Lord Russell's reply in the first of these debates.

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The conscription of 1863.

into fresh measures of retaliation. No conscription had taken place in Poland since the close of the Crimean War. At the beginning of 1863 the Russian Government determined to quell incipient insurrection by sweeping the insurgents into the ranks of the army. Very early on a January morning the police, supported by the troops, entered the houses of those who were supposed to be disaffected, and seized the men. The official journals of the Empire congratulated themselves on the success of the stroke. Never, so they boasted, had a conscription been effected with more ease. But, easy as the unexpected stroke had proved, it drove passive discontent into active insurrection. Those of the populace who had escaped the blow fled into the country, and formed themselves into insurrectionary bands. These bands were necessarily driven for their support into acts of rapine and outrage. Continually increasing in numbers, they inspired terror by their power; and the Russians were forced gradually to acknowledge that they had to deal with a condition of things which resembled civil war.[1]

Prussia, it is fair to recollect, was specially affected by the unrest in Poland. Her territory marched upon Poland; large numbers of Poles owed allegiance to the Prussian monarchy; and a movement which aimed at the restoration of the old kingdom of Poland might eventually prove almost as inconvenient to Prussia as to Russia. Herr von Bismarck, moreover, who had now succeeded to the first place in the King of Prussia's

[1] *State Papers*, vol. liii. pp. 768–774. Lord Russell, on receiving from the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg a copy of the *Official Gazette* defending this arbitrary recruiting, replied in a short despatch: 'No argument can make it right to turn conscription into proscription, and to condemn men to military service because they are suspected of revolutionary designs.' *Ibid.*, p. 780. Cf. Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. ii. p. 556 *seq.* *De la Gorce*, vol. iv. p. 424. M. Ollivier defends the conscription, and denies its success. It was adopted on the advice of Count Wielopolski. *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. vi. p. 91.

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The military convention between Prussia and Russia.

Council, had other objects in view than the discomfiture of the Poles. In the combat, which he was already preparing, he was anxious to secure the benevolent neutrality of Russia, and no means seemed so effectual for this purpose as to afford the Russian Government seasonable help in the hour of its difficulty. Animated by this consideration, he sent Count Alvensleben to St. Petersburg in February 1863, and authorised him to conclude a military convention, under which the troops of either country should help each other to put down rebellion, and should be at liberty to follow rebels across their respective frontiers.[1] The convention, Herr von Bismarck has himself confessed, was 'not demanded by the military situation, with which the Russian troops were strong enough to cope.' It had 'a diplomatic rather than a military significance.'[2] It was, in fact, a sign to Europe that Russia and Prussia were allies. It was a bid for the neutrality of Russia in the contests of the future.

The news of this convention came as a startling surprise to the Courts of Western Europe. We should not be acting worse, said Lord Russell, if we allowed a Federal man-of-war to attack a Confederate in British waters;[3] and, in France, M. Drouyn de Lhuys declared that the Government of the King of Prussia had revived the Polish question, and suggested that identic remonstrances should be addressed to Berlin from Paris and London.[4] But, though this outward agreement existed between the Western powers, the days were already gone

The attitude of the Western powers.

[1] De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. iv. p. 427; and cf. Lord Palmerston's speech. *Hansard*, vol. clxix. p. 576; and further debates in *ibid.*, vol. clxxi. pp. 479, 688, 1253; and vol. clxxii. pp. 670, 1057.

[2] *Bismarck, Reflections and Reminiscences*, vol. i. pp. 342, 343.

[3] *State Papers*, vol. liii. p. 807. Lord Russell's words were: 'If Great Britain were to allow a Federal ship of war to attack a Confederate ship in British waters, Great Britain would become a party to the war. . . . It is obvious that by this convention Prussia engages to become a party in the war against the Poles.'

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 788 and 809.

when they could act cordially together for a common object. France, on this occasion, desired that the joint reproaches of the two Governments should be addressed to Berlin. England replied that they should be lodged with the greater culprit at St. Petersburg. England, or her Prime Minister, thought that France desired to pick a quarrel with Prussia in order that she might have an excuse for rectifying her own frontier on the Rhine.[1] France, on the contrary, suspected that England was anxious to embroil her neighbour with Russia, whose friendship was gradually becoming of importance to the Emperor of the French. Their mutual suspicions paralysed the action of the two powers; and an excuse for doing nothing was afforded by a new step on the part of Prussia. It did not suit Herr von Bismarck's purpose to expose himself to a joint protest from France and England. The convention—from his standpoint—had fulfilled its main purpose by showing Russia that she could rely on Prussian friendship. He had himself declared that in a military sense it was unnecessary. Russia was induced to say that she did not propose to avail herself of its provisions. Herr von Bismarck was thus able to declare that the convention was a dead letter; and the protest, which had been preparing at Paris, was accordingly smothered before it saw the light.[2]

Though, however, the protest was not made, the Western powers could not see with indifference the sufferings of the Poles. Early in the Session of 1863, Lord Russell took occasion to express in strong language his opinion of Russian policy. He declared that he had told the Russian Ambassador that the

[1] *Life of Palmerston*, vol. v. p. 232. Cf. Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. ii. pp. 569-578. Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. vi. p. 119.

[2] De la Gorce, *L'Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iv. p. 432; and cf. *State Papers*, vol. liii. p. 814.

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conscription 'was the most imprudent and the most unjust step that the Russian Government could take.'[1] On the 2nd of March he followed up his speech in Parliament by a despatch to St. Petersburg, in which he claimed the right for 'Great Britain, as a party to the treaty of 1815, and as a power deeply interested in the tranquillity of Europe, to express its opinion upon the events now taking place;' and in which he proceeded to ask why his Imperial Majesty, whose benevolence is generally acknowledged, should not 'put an end at once to this bloody conflict by proclaiming mercifully an immediate and unconditional amnesty to his revolted Polish subjects, and at the same time announce his intention to replace without delay his kingdom of Poland in possession of the political and civil privileges which were granted to it by the Emperor Alexander I. in execution of the stipulations of the treaty of 1815?'[2] Having written in this way to Russia, he next addressed himself to France. 'Her Majesty's Government—so he said—are of opinion that the next step to be taken is to invite all the chief powers who signed the treaty of Vienna to concur in advising Russia to adhere to its stipulations, and to resort to its policy.'[3]

Lord Russell's despatch of March 1863.

The Government of France received Lord Russell's proposal with some displeasure. In the first place they were not altogether pleased that the British Government should assume the initiative in a matter in which the French people had long taken a particular interest, and in the next place they hesitated to join in a representation which, so far as Great Britain was concerned, was avowedly not intended to lead to ulterior measures. However great the moral effect of such a remonstrance

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxix. pp. 564, 568.

[2] *State Papers*, vol. liii. p. 806. No answer in writing was returned to the despatch, but a verbal reply to it was given to the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg. *Ibid.*, p. 832.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 814.

The joint remonstrance of April 1863.

might prove, the Emperor of the French instinctively felt that diplomatic pressure, unsustained by military demonstrations, would in all probability be disregarded by the Czar. In addition to these considerations, the Emperor hesitated to take a step which was certain to be regarded with disfavour at St. Petersburg. Instead, therefore, of immediately acceding to Lord Russell's request, the Emperor decided on making a personal appeal to the Czar. He directed M. Drouyn de Lhuys to urge the Russian Government to anticipate the remonstrances of Europe by making the necessary concessions. He made the appeal more pointed by writing himself in the same sense to the Czar. The Court of Russia, however, showed no disposition to yield to the friendly remonstrance of its ally; and the Emperor, stimulated by French opinion to do something for Poland, fell back on Lord Russell's proposal.[1] The great powers of Europe, with one striking exception, agreed to address their remonstrances to St. Petersburg on the same day. Lesser powers, like Spain and Italy, were induced to follow their example, and on the 17th of April the remonstrances were handed to Prince Gortchakoff,[2] the Minister of the Czar, and the near relation of the man who had been one of the first victims of the insurrection.

One power alone refused to take part in this demonstration. Herr von Bismarck was still cynically indifferent to the woes of Poland, and resolutely determined to purchase Russian friendship. Prussia, under his guidance, therefore pointedly abstained from either reproach or menace. Her abstention strengthened Prince Gortchakoff's position. France, as the Polish proverb ran, was 'too far' to lend effectual help to the Poles; Austria was 'too near' to expose herself rashly

[1] De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. iv. pp. 439–449.

[2] The British despatch, dated the 10th of April, will be found in *State Papers*, vol. liii. p. 863.

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to a quarrel with her powerful neighbour;[1] and this country, it was known, while taking the lead in moral remonstrance, had no intention of translating her words into action. Prince Gortchakoff was consequently emboldened to reject the applications which France, Austria, and Great Britain were addressing to her, and which other powers were supporting.[2] Perhaps, at this point, the Western powers would have been wise if they had abstained from further remonstrance. It was tolerably plain that friendly advice, unsupported by military demonstration, would be ineffectual. It is, indeed, unhappily the fact that in politics, as in everything else in this world, moral suasion is only effective when force is behind it. It is the fear of force, not the power of reasoning, which deters the criminal from crime, the cruel from cruelty; and, so far from it being true to say that 'force is no remedy,' it would be much more true to admit that the only remedy is force.[3]

The remonstrances of June 1863.

Force, however, was the one remedy for which the three powers were not prepared, and which this country was loud in proclaiming she would in no circumstances employ. And her remonstrances, in consequence, sounded like an unshotted gun in the ears of the Russian Minister. Undeterred, indeed, by her unhappy failure in April, she joined the Courts of Austria and France in a fresh remonstrance in June, formulating with them six principal concessions which Russia might make, and suggesting that the great powers might meet to discuss the future lot of the Poles. But she only brought down upon herself a fresh rebuff. The Polish question—so Prince Gortchakoff replied in July—was a domestic question for Russia to settle, and in

[1] De la Gorce, *L'Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iv. p. 450.

[2] The reply to the British despatch is in *State Papers*, vol. liii. p. 892.

[3] See, as to Lord Russell's declaration that he would not in any case go to war, the *Times*, 14th of July, 1863. *Hansard*, vol. clxx. p. 1385, and vol. clxxi. p. 488.

which she would not tolerate the intervention of powers which had no concern with Poland. Russia would not accept, therefore, the idea of a conference upon it. She was, however, willing to refer it to the three powers which in the preceding century had participated in the division of Poland. The wolves might meet and discuss the fate of the lamb.[1]

The third remonstrance.

This reply disconcerted the three intervening powers. France and Great Britain naturally saw in it an attempt to detach Austria from the Western allies. Perhaps, for that very reason, they were anxious to show that the object had not been attained. The three powers at any rate agreed upon a third attempt, and in August addressed a third remonstrance to the Russian Government. This time Prince Gortchakoff, encouraged by the approach of winter and the knowledge that he had nothing to fear, ventured on a shorter answer. He declined the overtures that were made to him, and declared that the correspondence was closed.[2] Thenceforward the insurrection and its repression were suffered to take their course, and Poland was ultimately left at the mercy of its Russian masters.

The duchies of Schleswig and of Holstein

Almost at the moment at which the Western powers were receiving this rebuff, a second dispute, which had occupied diplomacy for years, suddenly assumed an acute shape; for on the 15th of November, 1863, Frederick VII., King of Denmark, died, and his death raised at once what is commonly known as the Schleswig-Holstein question.

Lord Palmerston is said to have declared that there were only three men in Europe who had ever understood the Schleswig-Holstein question; and he added that

[1] De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. iv. pp. 454–457. The British despatch of the 17th of June will be found in *State Papers*, vol. liii. p. 897. Prince Gortchakoff's reply in *ibid.*, p. 901. Cf. Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. ii. p. 597 *seq.*

[2] *State Papers*, vol. liii. pp. 911, 916. De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. iv. p. 460.

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one of them (the Prince Consort) was dead, that another of them (a Danish statesman) was mad, and that the third (he himself) had forgotten it.[1]

The two duchies of Schleswig and Holstein lie to the south of modern Denmark. Holstein, the more southern of the two, is almost exclusively German in its population. Schleswig, the more northern, contains a mixed population of Danes and Germans. In the course of the fourteenth century Schleswig was conquered by Denmark, but ceded to Count Gerard of Holstein. It was then provided that the duchies should be under one lord, and that they should never be united to Denmark. This is the first fact to realise in the long and complicated history of the Schleswig-Holstein question.

The line of Gerard of Holstein expired in 1375. It was succeeded by a branch of the House of Oldenburg. In 1448 a member of this House, the nephew of the reigning Duke, was elected to the throne of Denmark. The reigning Duke procured in that year a confirmation of the compact that Schleswig should never be united with Denmark. Dying, however, without issue in 1459, the Duke was succeeded, on the election of the Estates, by his nephew, Christian I., of Denmark. In electing Christian, the Estates compelled him in 1460 to renew the compact confirmed in 1448; and thus, though duchies and crown were thenceforward united, the only link between them was the Sovereign. Even this link could possibly be severed; for the succession in the duchies was confined to the male line, while the crown of Denmark, like the crown of England, might descend through a female.

[1] Cf. Thouvenel, *Le Secret de l Empereur*, vol. ii. p. 220, note; and La Marmora, *Un peu plus de Lumière*, p. 42. The reader who wishes to understand the German side of the Schleswig-Holstein question cannot do better than consult Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iii. pp. 3–129.

Thus, while the fourteenth century declared that Schleswig and Holstein should be joined together and separate from Denmark, the fifteenth century placed duchies and kingdom—still organically distinct—under one head, uniting them solely by the link of the crown. It would complicate this narrative if stress were laid on the various changes in the relations between kingdom and duchies which were consequent on the unsettled state of Europe during the three succeeding centuries. By a treaty concluded in 1773, however, the arrangements made three hundred years before were confirmed. The duchies reverted to the King of Denmark on exactly the same conditions as in the time of Christian I.

Such an arrangement was not likely to be respected amid the convulsions which afflicted Europe in the commencement of the nineteenth century. In 1806 Christian VII. took advantage of the dissolution of the German Empire to incorporate the duchies in his kingdom. No one was in a position to dispute the act of the monarch. In 1815, however, the King of Denmark, by virtue of his rights in Holstein and Lauenburg, joined the confederation of the Rhine,[1] and the nobility of Holstein, brought in this way into fresh connection with Germany, appealed to the German Diet; but the Diet in the first quarter of the nineteenth century was subject to influences opposed to the rights of nationalities. It declined to interfere, and the union of duchies and kingdom was maintained.[2]

[1] Count Vitzthum says in a paper published anonymously in the *Times* of the 4th of December, 1863, and republished in *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. ii. p. 262, Schleswig 'having never been formally incorporated, the Congress of Vienna inherited a doubt of a thousand years' standing.' Denmark got the benefit, if any, of that doubt. Schleswig was not considered to belong to the German Confederation.

[2] In the preceding paragraph I have reproduced, almost *totidem verbis*, the account which I gave of the matter in the original edition of the *Life of Lord J. Russell*, vol. ii. p. 371 *seq.*, and which was largely founded on a remarkable article in the *Home and Foreign Review* of January 1862. I struck this account out of the later editions of the work in deference to the criticism that it was fitter for a history than a biography.

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The preceding paragraphs may, perhaps, enable the reader to understand the leading features in a complicated history. He should, however, endeavour also to realise the distinction between Holstein and Schleswig. Holstein and the little contiguous duchy of Lauenburg had for centuries been part of Germany. The Eider, which separates Schleswig from Holstein, had been regarded for ages as the northern boundary of the Holy Roman Empire.[1] Holstein, moreover, was essentially German in its language, its associations, and its traditions. Schleswig, on the contrary, though it had for centuries been attached to Holstein, had never been purely German. Situated between Denmark and Germany, it had a mixed population drawn both from Germany and Scandinavia. The ties which united it to Denmark were at least as strong as the influences which attracted it to Germany. These facts, however, were usually ignored by German historians and German statesmen. They argued that for centuries Schleswig had been attached to Holstein, that the two duchies had passed together to the Danish crown, that the same condition—that they should never be united to Denmark—had applied equally to both, and that it was impossible to separate the fate of the one from that of the other. They succeeded in emphasising these arguments by an expression. With that facility which the German language affords for compounding words, they ceased to talk of the duchies of Schleswig and of Holstein;[2] they included them both in the same term 'Schleswig-Holstein.' They thought, perhaps, that what language had joined together, man would be unable to put asunder.

In the middle of the nineteenth century the question which was thus slumbering became more acute.

[1] 'Eidora Romani terminus Imperii, disait-on au moyen âge, pour marquer où finissait le Saint-Empire Romain.' De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. iv. p. 469.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 470.

The accession of Frederick VII. to the throne of Denmark.

Frederick VII. succeeded to the throne of Denmark in January, 1848. He was the last of his line. On his death, if no other arrangement had been made, the crown of Denmark would have descended through a female to the present reigning dynasty, while the duchies by the old undisputed law would have reverted to a younger branch, which descended through males to the House of Augustenburg.

It will thus be seen that (i) from 1459 to 1806 the kingdom of Denmark and the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein had been ruled by the same sovereign, on the condition that the duchies should not be incorporated in the kingdom; (ii) since 1806 this condition had been disregarded, and duchies and kingdom had been incorporated; (iii) on the death of the reigning monarch the different laws of succession in duchies and kingdom involved their devolution on different families. These three facts were complicated by the rival views respecting Schleswig held in Denmark and Germany. In Denmark, Schleswig was regarded in no sense as German. In Germany it was maintained that Holstein and Schleswig were connected by an indissoluble tie; and thus it followed that Schleswig, like Holstein, was part of the German Confederation.

The revolution of 1848.

Frederick VII. succeeded to the throne at a critical moment. Within a few weeks of his succession, revolution burst out in every part of Europe; and Germany and Denmark felt the full force of the movement. Confronted with revolution at home, and Germany across the border, the new King attempted a compromise. He separated Holstein from Schleswig, incorporating Schleswig in Denmark, but allowing Holstein, under a new constitution, to form part of the German Confederation. The German Diet replied to this challenge by formally incorporating Schleswig in Germany, and by committing to Prussia the office of mediator. War

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broke out, but the arms of Prussia were crippled by the revolution which shook her throne. The sword of Denmark, the attitude of Russia, and the remonstrance of Europe prevailed, and the duchies were compelled to submit to the decision which Frederick VII. had pronounced.[1]

It was plain, however, that this decision depended on the life of the reigning Sovereign. His death would sever the knot which he had tied, and separate duchies from kingdom. To provide against this contingency the new King determined to choose as his successor, both in the kingdom and in the duchies, Prince Christian of Glücksburg; and the great powers of Europe, appreciating the wisdom of the decision, decided on giving it their moral support.[2] At a conference held in London in 1850, at which the five great powers and the kingdom of Sweden were represented, but at which the German Confederation, as such, had no voice, it was resolved to recognise the integrity of the Danish monarchy, with the reservation that no alteration should be made in the relations of Holstein with the German Confederation. These arrangements, thus made in 1850, were formally embodied in a treaty in 1852,[3] and the Duke of Augustenburg was induced to renounce his claim to the succession, both for himself and his heirs, in consideration of a large sum of money. Like Esau, he sold his birthright; but, unlike Esau, he got a good deal more than a mess of pottage for the transaction.[4]

The conference of 1850 and the treaty of 1852.

[1] *Life of Lord John Russell* (1st edition), vol. ii. p. 374; but cf. Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iii. pp. 49–57.

[2] Christian IX. (of Glücksburg) was the husband of Louise, the sister of Prince Frederick of Hesse; and Prince Frederick of Hesse, as the son of Princess Charlotte of Denmark, was the heir to the Danish throne. Prince Frederick was, however, 'thought undesirable, and he was passed over in favour of his sister,' on condition that she 'should transfer the right to her husband and his male heirs.' Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iv. pp. 59, 60.

[3] For the protocol of 1850 see *State Papers*, vol. xli. p. 953. For the treaty of 1852, *ibid.*, p. 13.

[4] The Duke received a full discharge for some considerable debts, and, in addition, '1,500,000 doubles

The diplomatists of Europe breathed a little more freely when the representatives of the contracting powers put their hands to the treaty of 1852. Yet the treaty did not effect much. The contracting powers did not guarantee the arrangement to which they subscribed. They merely undertook to recognise it in the event of its being carried out. They acted—they acknowledged that they acted—at the invitation of the Danish Government, in order to give to the arrangement, relative to the succession, an additional pledge of stability by an act of European recognition.[1] But they took no steps to ascertain the wishes of the people, who were chiefly concerned. They disposed of Schleswig and of Holstein much as their predecessors at Vienna had disposed of the people of Belgium or of the people of Central Italy.

The conclusion of the treaty of 1852, however, did not terminate the controversy. In the correspondence which had preceded its signature the Danish Government had spoken of its desire to reconcile the conflicting claims of Germans and Danes in Schleswig, and had promised that Schleswig should not be incorporated in Denmark.[2] After the signature of the treaty, these admissions were carefully collected, and were used by the Diet as pretexts for raising German pretensions.

rixdales, dont 9¼ pièces font un marc d'argent fin de Cologne.' In return he renounced, for himself and his heirs, any claim to the succession 'sur notre parole et notre honneur de Duc.' The renunciation is printed in *State Papers*, vol. xlii. p. 1126; see especially p. 1128; and cf. De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. iv. p. 476. It is worth adding that, according to Herr von Sybel, Queen Victoria was opposed to this arrangement, and only ultimately accepted it on Lord Derby's statement that he did not feel himself in a position to carry on the Government except on the basis of the signature of the protocol. *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iii. pp. 82, 86.

[1] The words are Mr. Disraeli's, in *Hansard*, vol. clxxvi. p. 710. I cannot improve on them.

[2] *State Papers*, vol. xli. p. 933 *seq.* De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iv. p. 473; and see the late Mr. Max Müller's letter to the *Times* of the 18th of February, 1864. 'The King of Denmark told the Danish Minister at Vienna to say in 1851 that "the King has already promised and further declares that neither shall an incorporation of Schleswig with Denmark take place, nor any steps be adopted with this intention."'

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The Diet was partly actuated by the conduct of the Danes, who tried to force their own language on the Germans in the duchy.[1] A heated diplomatic correspondence ensued. In this controversy Germany and Denmark adhered to the principles for which they had throughout contended. It was the object of Denmark to treat Holstein separately, to give it complete autonomy, and to draw the remaining portions of the Danish kingdom more closely together. It was, on the contrary, the object of Germany to confound Schleswig with Holstein, and to decline to accept for Holstein privileges which were not equally secured for Schleswig.

The action of Frederick VII. in 1863.

At last, in 1863, Frederick VII. brought matters to an issue. In March of that year he conceded independence to Holstein, endowing it with autonomous institutions; in the following November he assented to a law binding Schleswig more closely to Denmark.[2]

From a purely Danish standpoint, much could be said for this decision. It was, in fact, the logical consequence of the policy which Denmark had steadily followed. It emphasised, as Denmark had always desired to emphasise, the distinction between Schleswig and Holstein; and, while recognising that Holstein was German, and part of the German Confederation, reaffirmed the Danish doctrine that Schleswig was Danish. But these very considerations made the decision more objectionable to Germany. The Germans had throughout laid stress on the historic connection of Schleswig with Holstein. They had argued that it was impossible to separate the two duchies, that they must be dealt with on the same principles, and be subjected to the same conditions. They naturally therefore protested against

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxxvi. p. 829.

[2] 'Il fixa la condition du Sleswig, et sans l'incorporer, sans lui refuser ses franchises provinciales, le rattacha fortement à la monarchie.' De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iv. p. 474; and cf. Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. vii. p. 24. For the German view of the constitution of March, see Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iii. p. 126.

the action of Frederick VII. They declined even to accept independent institutions for Holstein, if Schleswig were excluded. They refused—they were compelled by their attitude to refuse—to agree to the closer union between Schleswig and Denmark, which the arrangement of November contemplated.

The accession of Christian IX.

The law which settled the constitution of Schleswig was signed on the 13th of November, 1863. Two days later the King, who accepted it, died. In accordance with the arrangement which had been adopted at the Conference of London in 1850, and which had been incorporated in the treaty of 1852, he was succeeded by Prince Christian of Glücksburg as Christian IX., and on the 18th the new King formally confirmed the constitution which his predecessor had sanctioned.[1] The German Diet, sitting at Frankfort, at once protested, and, following up its protest with action, decided to occupy Holstein with Federal troops till Denmark fulfilled its duties to Germany. It delegated to Hanover and Saxony the duty of carrying out the execution of its orders.[2] Almost at the same time the Duke of Augustenburg, regardless of the solemn promise which he had made on his word of honour as a duke, delegated to his son the rights which he had sold; and his son, in a proclamation to his 'subjects' in Holstein, Schleswig, and Lauenburg, claimed the succession.[3]

Thus, as 1863 drew to a close, German troops were already occupying Holstein; Germany was demanding the revocation of the arrangements which had been made by Frederick VII., and which had been sanctioned

[1] The new King had some hesitation in signing. He was induced to do so by the strong recommendation of his Minister, Mr. Hall, by the request of the municipality of Copenhagen, and by the advice—if M. Ollivier is right—of Mr. (afterwards Sir Augustus) Paget, the British Minister at the Court of Denmark. *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. vii. p. 32; and cf. Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iii. p. 175.

[2] *Parl. Papers*, 1864, vol. lxiv. p. 355; and cf. De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iv. p. 478.

[3] *Parl. Papers*, 1864, vol. lxiv. p. 231.

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by Christian IX.; the Duke of Augustenburg was claiming that he was the true heir to the duchies, and the German people were displaying a disposition to support his claim. These various incidents, so threatening to the peace of Europe, naturally attracted keen attention in neutral countries, and in Great Britain especially warm interest was taken in proceedings which seemed to threaten the independence and the integrity of the Danish kingdom.

It so happened that the British Foreign Office was filled by a statesman who, whatever other qualities he might possess, was an expert writer of despatches. Lord Russell had the rare art of putting a plain truth in plain language, and of saying a disagreeable thing with an almost cynical indifference to the effects of his remarks on his many correspondents. So far back as 1860 he had advised Denmark to give a liberal and separate constitution to Schleswig, and to go the utmost length in the way of conciliation.[1] He recognised that, in the arrangements which she had made, Denmark had not scrupulously observed the stipulations of the treaty of London; and in February 1861 he had declared that Germany would be justified in using her power to enforce the submission of the financial arrangements to the States of Holstein.[2] In September 1862 he had again urged Denmark to yield, so far as Holstein was concerned, all that Germany demanded; to give Schleswig complete autonomy, with no representation in the Danish Rigsraad; to assent to a normal budget, the proportions being separately voted by Denmark, Holstein, Lauenburg, and Schleswig; and to allow all further, or extraordinary, expenses to be separately submitted to the Rigsraad, and to the Diets of Schleswig, Holstein, and of Lauenburg.[3] Unfortunately the

Lord Russell's advice to Denmark and Germany.

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1861, vol. lxv. p. 69.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 145.

[3] *Ibid.*, 1863, vol. lxxiv. p. 305.

advice thus given, which was accepted by Austria and Prussia, was not adopted by Denmark.[1] A Swedish minister said of it: 'Generally speaking, the monarchs of Europe have found it difficult to manage one parliament; but I observe, to my surprise, that Lord Russell is of opinion that the King of Denmark will be able to manage four.'[2] In more solemn language, the Prime Minister of Denmark asserted that the despatch was the most disastrous blow that could be inflicted on his country, and that it was likely to lead to the dismemberment of the Danish monarchy.[3] Acting on his advice, the Danish Government replied by refusing to enter into any negotiations on the internal affairs of Schleswig,[4] and a few months later by issuing the Constitution of March 1863.[5]

Thus, in the summer of 1863, nothing that had been said or done in the British Foreign Office threw any obligation on this country to support the cause of Denmark. So far as its treaty obligations were concerned, the Danes had no more claim to the support of Great Britain than to that of any other nation which had signed the treaty of London; and, so far as the Foreign Minister's despatches were concerned, they had less claim on its consideration than the Poles. Sympathy, indeed, was widely felt for a gallant little nation, whose integrity was threatened by stronger neighbours; a desire was generally expressed that the territorial arrangements

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1863, vol. lxxiv. pp. 319–327.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. clxxvi. p. 714.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 906, and Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. vii. p. 19. It is right to add that Lord Adolphus Loftus, who represented this country at Berlin, thought that if the Cabinet had told Denmark that she would be unsupported if she did not accept Lord John's proposal, she would have yielded. *Diplomatic Reminiscences*, 1st Series, vol. ii. p. 259.

[4] *Parl. Papers*, 1863, vol. lxxiv. p. 362. Cf. Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iii. pp. 118–122.

[5] The Constitution of March 1863 will be found in *Parliamentary Papers*, 1864, vol. lxiv. p. 37. The German objection to it—which was, briefly, that it gave Holstein too little control over its finances, and that it made no mention of Schleswig—is in *ibid.*, pp. 40–43.

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of Northern Europe should not be disturbed to the detriment of Denmark; but neither treaty stipulations nor Lord Russell's language made it necessary for Great Britain to depart from an attitude of benevolent neutrality.

Lord Palmerston's declaration in July 1863.

At this moment, however, the situation was suddenly altered by a speech of Lord Palmerston in the House of Commons. Mr. Seymour Fitzgerald, who had filled the office of Under Secretary at the Foreign Office in Lord Derby's Ministry, and who therefore spoke with the authority which attaches to the official representative of his party, gave the Prime Minister private notice that he would draw attention to the Danish question;[1] and Lord Palmerston, speaking with the deliberation of a man who is not taken unprepared, and under the responsibility attaching to his great position, said: 'We are convinced—I am convinced at least—that if any violent attempt were made to overthrow [the] rights and to interfere with [the] independence of Denmark, those who made the attempt would find in the result that it would not be Denmark alone with which they would have to contend.'[2]

Such language was not unusual in the mouth of the Prime Minister. It had been his habit throughout his long career to use strong words, even when he was not prepared to follow them up with strong action. The success which had rewarded a policy of bluster had blinded both himself and his followers to the grave risk of rebuff which necessarily attends such declarations. And on this occasion the risk was undoubtedly great. In the first place, Lord Palmerston, notwithstanding his long experience, was ignorant of the forces with

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxxvi. p. 716.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. clxxii. p. 1252. Lord Blomfield, the British Ambassador at Vienna, told Count Rechberg that a federal execution in Holstein, if persisted in, would have serious consequences to Europe. *Parl. Papers*, 1864, vol. lxiv. (No. 2), p. 117. This declaration emphasised Lord Palmerston's language.

which he had to deal. He had no knowledge of the national uprising which was affecting Germany. He had even less knowledge of the position which Prussia was gradually attaining, or of the character of her Prime Minister; and, in the next place, his language was calculated to frustrate the policy which, presumably with his own sanction, his Foreign Minister was pursuing, for, while Lord Russell was persistently urging Denmark to put herself in the right by concession, Lord Palmerston was injudiciously telling her that, if she were attacked, she would not be left alone.[1]

The language of the Prime Minister was, however, supported by public opinion. Writing a few weeks later, the 'Times' declared that 'we could hardly stand by and see the integrity of the Danish monarchy unfairly interfered with;'[2] and in the early days of the autumn of 1863 everything suggested that, if the two parties to the quarrel failed to reconcile their difficulties, this country might be drawn into a European war. With this prospect before it, the British Government decided on approaching the Emperor of the French, and on suggesting the possibility of joint action by the Western powers. Accordingly, in September 1863, Lord Russell proposed that the two powers should offer their good offices, or, if the Government of France should consider such a step as likely to be unavailing, should 'remind Austria, Prussia, and the German Diet that any act on their part tending to weaken the integrity and independence of Denmark would be at variance with the treaty of the 8th of May, 1852.'[3]

Lord Russell's proposal to France.

This venture did not lead to any tangible result.

[1] 'Lord John shook his head anxiously at this warlike remonstrance. When the Prussian Ambassador remonstrated with the haughty orator, Palmerston, treating the matter lightly, answered: "We must encourage the Danes a little; they are the weaker party, maltreated by you."' Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iii. p. 145.

[2] *Times*, 1st of September, 1863.

[3] *Parl. Papers*, 1864 (No. 2), vol. lxiv. p. 130.

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The Emperor Napoleon took a comparatively languid interest in the affairs of Denmark. The insurrection in Poland seemed to him a much more vital matter than the position of the duchies. His own ideas of natural frontiers, his avowed sympathy with nationalities, prevented him from displaying any marked opposition to the claim which Germany was making for the extension of German influence in a German duchy. He attached, moreover, little significance to the stipulations of the treaty of 1852. His own dreams could only be realised by the disregard of treaties; and he was unable, therefore, to base his policy on the necessity of their rigorous observance. In addition to these considerations, the Emperor was smarting from the rebuff which he had just received from Russia. In concert with England he had addressed remonstrance after remonstrance to St. Petersburg, and his remonstrances had been met with a contemptuous refusal from Prince Gortchakoff to continue the discussion. He was not prepared to accept from Germany a similar reply to that to which he had submitted from Russia, and his Minister accordingly told Lord Russell that 'unless her Majesty's Government was prepared to go further, if necessary, than the mere presentation of a note, and the receipt of an evasive reply, he [M. Drouyn de Lhuys] was sure that the Emperor would not adopt [the] suggestion.'[1]

The French reply.

[1] At this point the British Government, if it had been wise, would have seriously reviewed its whole position. If Lord Palmerston's language in the previous July was to be taken in its literal sense—if it was really true that Denmark was not to be left alone to defend herself against attack—common prudence suggested an understanding with France, and the concerted action of the two great Western powers; but if, on the contrary,

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1864, vol. lxiv. (No. 2), p. 131.

Lord Palmerston's language was mere bluster, and was not intended to be followed by action, common fairness required that in some way or other it should be explained. Of all possible courses, the worst—so any plain man would conclude—would be to leave Denmark under the apprehension that the words were to be taken in the sense universally ascribed to them, and which the Prime Minister alone did not attach to them. Such a course would naturally encourage Denmark in her resistance to German power, and when the crisis came leave her in the lurch without the assistance which she had been led by the Prime Minister's language to expect.

Lord Russell's new action.

Unfortunately, however, instead of taking this course, the British Government used alone the language which France had wisely refused to join it in employing. 'Her Majesty's Government,' so Lord Russell wrote, 'is bound to respect the integrity and independence of Denmark. The Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia have taken the same engagement. Her Majesty could not see with indifference a military occupation of Holstein, which is only to cease upon terms injuriously affecting the constitution of the whole Danish monarchy. Her Majesty's Government could not recognise this military occupation as a legitimate exercise of the powers of the Confederation, or admit that it could properly be called a federal execution. Her Majesty's Government could not be indifferent to the bearing of such an act upon Denmark and upon European interests. Her Majesty's Government, therefore, earnestly entreats the German Diet to pause, and to submit the questions in dispute between Germany and Denmark to the mediation of other powers unconcerned in the controversy, but deeply concerned in the maintenance of the peace of Europe and the independence of Denmark.' [1]

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1864, vol. lxiv. (No. 2), pp. 144, 145.

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Deliberately, therefore, Lord Russell, at the end of September 1863, was taking alone the course which he had invited France to follow, but which the French Government had refused to adopt; and his action seemed more serious because the newspapers, which were supposed to represent the opinion of the public, and to reflect the mind of the Government, were repeating in the autumn the language which the Prime Minister had used in the summer. 'Federal execution once attempted,' so wrote the 'Times,' 'Denmark would be in no want of allies.' And the 'Times' went on to argue that it would produce an offensive and defensive alliance between Denmark and Sweden; that 'nobody supposes that France would view with any displeasure a war with Germany;' and that, even if our statesmen declined to interfere, it was 'extremely doubtful how far our people could be induced to be tranquil spectators of the dismemberment' of Denmark. A week or two afterwards it told the German powers that they would 'learn that not only Denmark, but the great powers of Europe, reject their interpretation of treaties and of public law.'[1]

The Emperor proposes a congress.

In the meanwhile, the Emperor Napoleon, disconcerted at the rebuff which he had received from Russia, and unable to obtain any assurance from the British Cabinet that its remonstrances, if unheeded, would be followed by stronger measures, made a new effort to extricate himself from the difficulties with which he was surrounded. Writing in November 1863 to the Sovereigns of Europe, he declared that the settlement of Vienna was the foundation on which the political edifice of Europe stood, and that it was crumbling to pieces on all sides. It was the duty of the Sovereigns of Europe not to delay taking a decision until sudden and irresistible events should disturb their counsels.

[1] See the *Times*, 7th and 24th of October, 1863.

In these circumstances the Sovereigns would be wise to meet in Paris, and deliberate on the affairs of a perturbed Continent.[1]

This proposal might have been anticipated by any statesman who understood the Emperor's character. A congress was his usual expedient for the solution of every difficulty; but the experience of the past few years had shown that, though it was a tolerably easy matter to send out invitations to a congress, something usually occurred at the eleventh hour to prevent its assembly. There would not, therefore, have been any great risk in giving a friendly reception to a proposal which was certainly intended to promote the peace of Europe, and which, in any case, was unlikely to arrive at maturity. A few weeks later, indeed, the British Government was itself proposing a conference on the Danish question; and therefore, without any sacrifice of consistency, it might have accepted the principle of the Emperor's proposal, with the suggestion that the deliberations of the congress should be confined to the Polish and Danish questions. It did not occur, however, to the Cabinet to accept the principle of the Emperor's proposal, and to narrow the range of the congress's functions; and it hesitated to accept the invitation unlimited on the bare chance that it would not be called on to fulfil its engagement. With perhaps unnecessary frankness Lord Russell explained the objections to the proposal, and declared that the British Ministry 'would feel more apprehension than confidence at the meeting of a congress of Sovereigns and Ministers without fixed objects, ranging over the map of Europe, and exciting hopes and aspirations

Lord Russell's refusal.

[1] The Emperor announced his intention of proposing a congress, in his speech in opening the French Chambers on the 5th of November, 1863. The invitation to the congress was received by the Queen on the 9th of November. The invitation was published in the *Times* of the 12th of November. See the *Times*, 6th, 10th, and 12th of November, 1863.

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which they might find themselves unable either to gratify or to quiet.'

From one point of view Lord Russell's reply was a master stroke. It was unanswered and unanswerable. It made the meeting of a congress impossible. But from another point of view it was a blunder of the gravest character, for the best chance of preserving peace lay in a close understanding between France and England; and Lord Russell's diplomatic victory necessarily tended to intensify the estrangement between Paris and London. Moreover, with a singular lack of consideration for the feelings of his ally, Lord Russell not only despatched his damaging reply, but took the unusual course of publishing it in the 'Times.' He produced the impression by doing so that he had not only worsted the Emperor in argument, but that he wished all Europe to join with him in his satisfaction at the Emperor's discomfiture.[1]

No worse moment could have been chosen for increasing the irritation of the Emperor Napoleon; for between the date of the Emperor's invitation and the reply of the British Foreign Office events had moved rapidly. The Danish Rigsraad had passed the law incorporating Schleswig in Denmark; the death of Ferdinand VII. had vacated the Danish throne; his successor, Christian IX., had sanctioned the Constitution which the Rigsraad had voted; the Duke of Augustenburg had claimed the succession of the duchies; and some of the minor German powers had acknowledged him as their ruler. With federal execution already ordered, with the Duke of Augustenburg already in the duchies, the necessity for a clear understanding between France and England became greater than ever; and agreement was made more difficult by the Emperor's

[1] Lord Russell's reply, dated 12th of November, 1863, was published in the *Times* of the 28th.

natural annoyance at Lord Russell's summary rejection of his well-intentioned proposal.

The differences between France and England were accentuated by the language which their representatives held at Copenhagen. Both powers, in accordance with the usual practice, sent special envoys to the Danish capital to congratulate the new King on his accession to the throne. The French envoy, General Fleury, carefully abstained from any language which could encourage the Danes to entertain any false hopes of French assistance. The British envoy, better known afterwards as Lord Kimberley, who had been Lord Russell's Under Secretary at the Foreign Office, was instructed, in addition to the discharge of the ceremonious functions of his mission, to urge the Danes to give way on the points in which the British Foreign Secretary was still persuaded they were wrong.[1] The Danes, however, put their trust in the words of the Prime Minister of England, in the language of the British press, and in the attitude of the British people, and refused to give way. At the last moment, indeed, they withdrew the obnoxious patent of the previous March;[2] but they took no steps to withdraw the Constitution of November, or to indicate their readiness to abandon their policy of connecting Schleswig more closely with Denmark.

The federal execution in Holstein

In the meanwhile the troops of Hanover and Saxony were approaching the frontier of Holstein charged with the execution of the orders of the Diet, and Danish statesmen had carefully to consider whether they would allow or resist the occupation of the duchy. The language of the 'Times' counselled resistance, for it had assured them that, if execution took place, Denmark would be in no want of allies; but the language of the British Minister at Copenhagen (Mr. Paget)

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1864, vol. lxiv. pp. 320, 350, 351. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 355.

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recommended prudence. He persuaded the Danes not to resist the execution, and he assured them that they would have a better chance of securing the assistance of the powers if the execution were not resisted. Such language was almost as unfortunate as that which Lord Palmerston had held in the previous July.[1] When people are given advice and told that its adoption will increase their chance of receiving help, they naturally infer that they will not be left alone if they adopt it. The Danes consequently, putting their trust in the implied promise of the British Minister, withdrew their troops from Holstein, and stood firm on Schleswig soil behind the Eider.

Without, therefore, encountering any resistance, the soldiers of Saxony and Hanover proceeded to carry out the order of the Diet and to occupy Holstein. But the occupation was not attended with the consequences which the Diet had expected. Denmark still refused to yield, and her refusal emphasised the distinction which she had throughout the controversy maintained between her relations with Schleswig and her relations with Holstein. A new situation necessitated a new move, and the new movement was to introduce a new actor into the scene. Hitherto the action of Germany had been determined by the attitude of the Diet. Henceforward the control of the game was to pass from the hands of the Diet into the hands of one great German power, and that power happened to be represented by the strongest man in Europe, Herr von Bismarck.

Herr von Bismarck.

European statesmen, indeed, in 1863 were strangely ignorant of Herr von Bismarck's character. In August the 'Times' had spoken of 'the contempt which was universally felt for the Bismarck Ministry and its blunder-

[1] For Sir A. Paget's language and the effect of it, see Mr. Disraeli's speech. *Hansard*, vol. clxxvi. p. 737.

ing master.'[1] In October it had declared that 'the pride of aristocracy without its political skill, the obstinacy of the military character without its courage and decision—these are the fatal gifts which overturn thrones. . . . They are to be found in their most dangerous form among the counsellors of King William.'[2] The language which was thus used by the 'Times' reflected the views which were held by the chiefs of the British Ministry. Their ignorance was unfortunate; for, at the moment at which they were commencing a struggle with the Prussian Minister, they made the mistake of underrating the great qualities and ignoring the firm resolution of their opponent.

There was, indeed, some reason—so diplomatists thought—for supposing that Herr von Bismarck would refrain from taking an active part against the new King of Denmark. He had been opposed to federal execution in 1849; he had done his best in 1852 to induce the Duke of Augustenburg to yield to the views of Europe; and in the weeks which had preceded the death of Frederick VII. he had assured the representatives of Denmark that Prussia would appear as little as possible in the dispute.[3] When the Augustenburg claims were formally raised, moreover, he increased his unpopularity in Prussia by declining to commit himself to the Duke's cause, and by stating that the matter must be settled by the Diet in accordance with the terms of the treaty of London. But the fact was that Herr von Bismarck did not want the duchies for the Duke of Augustenburg; he wanted them for Prussia. He saw that an opportunity had arisen for strengthening Prussia at the cost of a little power unable to contend on equal terms with its stronger neighbours. The

[1] See the *Times* of the 22nd of August, 1863.

[2] *Ibid.*, 22nd of October, 1863.

[3] De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iv. pp. 480, 481.

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annexation of the duchies to Prussia would do much more than add a few square miles of territory to the Prussian kingdom; for at the extreme north-east of Holstein lay the harbour of Kiel, which in Prussian hands might dominate the Baltic, and the possession of the duchies would enable the owners of Kiel to link it by a canal with the North Sea.[1] Prussia, therefore, with these additions to her kingdom, might increase her naval power and political influence. Verily, as these ideas took shape in the mind of the Prussian Minister, he coveted the acquisition of the duchies as ardently as Ahab, centuries before, had longed to possess himself of Naboth's vineyard.

In the private atmosphere of the Prussian Cabinet Herr von Bismarck was already disclosing his secret aspirations. To the alarm of some of his colleagues, he was reminding his King that all his predecessors had added to their hereditary possessions by conquest, and he was implying that the opportunity had arisen when his Majesty might usefully follow their example.[2] But in his public utterances he was carefully concealing his private thoughts. He was posing as the agent of Germany, and insisting on the withdrawal of the Constitution of November, and a strict compliance with the engagements of 1852. It was only in the closing days of 1863, or the opening days of 1864, that he ventured on disclosing his full intentions, and that, by a stroke which was unanticipated in any of the chancelleries

[1] Some of my readers may recall M. Thiers's fine language in May 1866 on Herr von Bismarck's policy: 'Avez-vous, par exemple, un territoire fertile mais peu étendu qui, sans vous rendre ni fort, ni redoutable, arrondirait cependant le territoire d'un voisin puissant et ambitieux? Avez-vous quelque port aux eaux profondes qui pourrait donner asile à de grandes flottes? Ou, bien, occupez-vous la tête d'un canal, qui réunirait deux grandes mers? Et, pour comble de malheur, vos sujets parlent-ils la même langue que celle des sujets de ce voisin puissant et ambitieux, près duquel le sort vous a placés? Ah! malheur, malheur à vous.' The speech is given in Rothan, *La Politique Française en 1866*, Appendix, p. 411 *seq.*

[2] *Bismarck, Reflections and Reminiscences*, vol. ii. pp. 9, 10.

of Europe, he converted a German into a Prussian question.

His domestic difficulties.

In the attitude which he thus assumed, Herr von Bismarck was no doubt primarily influenced by his ambitious views for his own country; but he was also impelled to action by a growing consciousness of his own domestic difficulties. He had embarked in 1862 on a struggle with the Prussian Chamber, and at the end of 1863 he was worsted apparently, almost hopelessly, in the struggle. A dissolution in the summer of that year only led to a return in the autumn of a Chamber, pledged to refuse the Minister the supplies that he required, which actually declined to sanction the loan which the Minister demanded for the operations which were imminent.[1] It looked, in November 1863, as if Herr von Bismarck had the hard alternative before him of retiring from the contest, or of attempting to carry on the Government without the Chamber. Herr von Bismarck evaded the difficulty by suddenly placing himself in the forefront of the movement which was carrying all Germany to the Eider. By identifying himself with a great national uprising, he fanned Prussian patriotism into a flame. He caused the people to forget their constitutional dispute, and their constitutional grievance, in their ardent desire to support the Minister in the new contest on which he was embarking.

The occupation of Holstein by the troops of Hanover and Saxony had not produced the consequences which had been anticipated from it. Denmark still stood firm in Schleswig, and declined to yield all that Germany was demanding. German opinion was becoming impatient of a situation which had resulted in a deadlock,

[1] Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iii. p. 236. Herr von Bismarck told the Legislature that, 'if they refused the money, the Government would take it where it could find it.' *Ibid.*, p. 237.

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and German statesmen were hesitating to convert a domestic into a European question by carrying the contest from the German Duchy of Holstein into the Duchy of Schleswig, which no man could contend was part of the German Confederation. In these circumstances Herr von Bismarck made a new move in the game. Early in January 1864 he asked the Diet to send an ultimatum to Denmark demanding the immediate revocation of the Constitution of November. He persuaded Austria, afraid of abandoning the question to her Northern rival, to support the demand. The Diet, unprepared to take so extreme a course, rejected the proposal.[1] Its members hardly foresaw the consequences of their vote. It gave Herr von Bismarck the excuse which he required for acting without the Diet. Prussia and Austria—for Austria still shrank from leaving her rival in solitary possession of a great German question—at once formulated the demand which the Diet had rejected, and Denmark found herself face to face with the armed strength of Prussia and Austria, and in the grip of a man of blood and iron—of Herr von Bismarck.[2]

His action in January 1864.

Lord Russell urges concession.

In these grave circumstances Lord Russell again urged Denmark to put herself in the right by revoking the Constitution of November 1863. Her Majesty's Government—so he wrote—are met at every step with the assertion that Denmark has broken her engagements to Germany by establishing in November last that constitution for Denmark and Schleswig which is alleged to be a virtual incorporation of Denmark with Schleswig. Her Majesty's Government are unable to deny or refute these assertions.[3] The Danish Government replied with some reason that it could not repeal

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1864, vol. lxiv. pp. 467, 474.

[2] See Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iii. p. 238 *seq.*

[3] *Parl. Papers*, 1864, vol. lxiv. pp. 561, 565.

the Constitution without convening the Rigsraad, and that the forty-eight hours which Prussia and Austria had allowed it was not sufficient for this purpose. It was, however, persuaded by the British representative at Copenhagen to give a solemn undertaking to convoke the Rigsraad, and to obtain from it the necessary vote for the repeal of the Constitution.[1] The British representative not unnaturally thought that this concession ought to satisfy the two chief German powers, if they were not bent on the dismemberment of Denmark; but in recording this opinion he showed that he was as ignorant as his employers at home of the character of the statesman who was virtually controlling the situation. Herr von Bismarck, at any rate, never flinched from his determination. He had required the withdrawal of the Constitution; he was not to be put off by a promise to convoke the Rigsraad. A diplomatic solution of the controversy, moreover, was the one thing which in the interest of his own policy he wished to avoid. Even he could devise no pretext for the annexation of the duchies to Prussia, unless Prussia secured the booty by the right of conquest. Thus thinking, he neither hesitated nor paused. On the 1st of February, 1864, the Prussian and Austrian armies crossed the Eider; in the succeeding fortnight they occupied almost the whole of Schleswig; on the 17th of February they entered Jutland and seized Kolding; and, when this country protested against the invasion of Denmark proper, Herr von Bismarck replied that the occupation had been without his orders, but that the troops could not now be withdrawn.[2]

The Eider crossed.

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1864, vol. lxiv. p. 583 *seq.* De la Gorce, *Hist. du Second Empire*, vol. iv. p. 496.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. clxxiii. pp. 1159, 1546. The movement into Jutland, the result of an engagement on the frontier, was carried out in opposition to orders from Vienna and Berlin; but the position, when it was gained, was retained on the advice of General Von Moltke. Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iii. p. 293.

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These events stirred profoundly the feelings of the British people. They felt deeply for a little nation, ruthlessly attacked by two formidable powers; but they felt, also, bitterly the humiliation of leaving her without the support on which they, like the rest of the world, had understood that Lord Palmerston's rash words in the previous July had assured her that she might rely. And the feelings of the people of this country, it so happened, were quickened into keen vitality by a new tie, which had drawn them closely to the Danish royal family; for, in the preceding March, in the very days in which Frederick VII. had given Holstein her Constitution, the heir to the throne of England had been married to the daughter of Prince Christian of Glücksburg, and the new King of Denmark was therefore the father-in-law of the Prince of Wales.

The marriages of princes do not always make much impression on the feelings of nations. Concluded frequently for political reasons, they fail to appeal to the hearts of the people. The marriages of the House of Hanover had formed no exception to this rule. The wife of George I. was recollected for her misfortunes; the wife of George II. for her capacity; the wife of George III. for her conduct; the wife of George IV. for her ill treatment. But the pulse of the nation had not been quickened by any of these marriages. It throbbed, indeed, with passion at the treatment of Caroline of Brunswick; but it was stimulated by resentment at the King, and not by love for the Queen. Two marriages, indeed, in the nineteenth century had awakened a little more interest. The country had welcomed the marriage of Princess Charlotte with Prince Leopold, just as it had welcomed—another Saxe-Coburg union—the marriage of Queen Victoria with Prince Albert. But these two alliances created interest, not enthusiasm. It was the death of Princess Charlotte,

and not her marriage, which touched the heart of the nation. It was the death of the Prince Consort, and not his life, which drew the nation's attention to his worth.

The marriage of the Prince of Wales.

It was, however, quite otherwise with the marriage of the Prince of Wales. The British people were growing a little weary of the long series of German princes, who seemed to be the only possible consorts for the Royal Family of England. They thought the Court too German in its surroundings, and too German in its sympathies; and, when they first heard that the heir to the throne of England had sought a wife among another people, they were ready instinctively to approve his choice. With the Poet Laureate, they were all prepared to say—

> Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,
> But all of us Danes in our welcome of thee.

The welcome to the Princess Alexandra.

They were all of them ready to give the warmest of welcomes to their future Queen. And she came. On the morning of the 7th of March, 1863, she made her entry into London. She drove through the crowded streets, and through Hyde Park, on her way to Paddington, the route through the park being lined on each side by battalions of the newly formed volunteers. The Court functionaries did little to impart magnificence to the pageant. The equipages in which the royal party were seated were badly turned out; there were no outriders: no fitting display. Even the municipal authorities did their part imperfectly. The streets were ill kept; the confusion at places great. A dull English sky added to the poor effect. Yet the shabbiness of the pageant, the gloom of the climate, the faults in the arrangements, were all forgotten when the Princess appeared. Her beauty, her grace, the charm of her smile, as she bowed her acknowledgments to the crowds on either side of her, won, in a single

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moment, every heart. A whole generation has passed away since that day; men who were young then are now grey-headed; but perhaps no one, among the older Englishmen who can recollect that day, has ever forgotten the impression made on a whole city in an hour. The enthusiasm communicated itself like a shock of electricity from mind to mind.

The impression which the young Princess made, on her arrival, was increased as the weeks wore on. The seclusion in which the Sovereign lived, from her recent sorrow,[1] imposed additional duties on the heir apparent and his bride; and every occasion on which the Princess appeared in public added to the enthusiasm which her first appearance had excited. The photographs of her, which were in almost every household, made her appearance familiar to millions of her future subjects, who had no opportunity of seeing her themselves; and it is hardly an exaggeration to say that, if England could have been polled on the subject, the almost unanimous voice of the people would have declared that the most gracious, the most beautiful, the most charming woman in England was the Princess, who was to be their future Queen.

The feeling in England.

Angry, then, at an attack on a little nation by two of the most formidable powers in the world, irritated at the failure of the Ministry to redeem its own pledges, and stimulated into enthusiasm by a passionate admiration of the Princess who had come among them, the whole nation was deeply moved. Lord Shaftesbury said, in the House of Lords, that he had 'never known

[1] The Prince Consort had died on the 14th of December, 1861, or sixteen months before the Prince of Wales's marriage. I have made a few observations on his death in a succeeding chapter dealing with our relations with the United States; for, indebted as this country is to the Prince, the chief service which he rendered to it, or rather to the Anglo-Saxon race, was his counsel on the eve of his fatal illness. That advice averted the greatest disaster which could have befallen the United Kingdom: war with the great Anglo-Saxon Republic in North America.

the people of this country more profoundly stirred.'[1] Lord Ellenborough added, on the same occasion, that Parliament should not separate without having assured the Queen that it would 'support her Majesty in any measures which may become necessary for the maintenance of the independence of Denmark;'[2] and both Lord Shaftesbury's statement and Lord Ellenborough's advice would have found a ready echo in any meeting in any part of England. It is hardly an exaggeration to say, as the historian of our own times has said, that in England five out of every six persons were for war, and that five out of every six of the small minority, which was against war, were nevertheless in sympathy with the Danes.[3]

The opinion of the Queen and the decision of the Cabinet.

Neither the Court, however, nor the Cabinet as a whole, was prepared to take the extreme course which the country desired. Her Majesty had gained from the Prince Consort a much closer acquaintance with the aspirations and rights of Germany than was enjoyed by the average British statesman. She understood, better than her advisers, the movement which was gradually tending to German unity; and she disliked the notion of using the armed strength of this country to arrest the development of a race with which she herself was so closely connected, or to thwart the objects of a nation whose Crown Prince was married to her own daughter. Her views were shared by some members of the Cabinet, who were not prepared to follow Lord Palmerston into the dangers and difficulties of a European war;[4] and the Cabinet, influenced by these

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxxiii. p. 1627.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1630.
[3] McCarthy, *History of our Own Times*, vol. iii. p. 372.
[4] Lord Palmerston told the Prussian Minister that 'Prussia's proceedings involved the most unjust aggression and the most outrageous action known to history' (Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iii. p. 275)—language which was, to say the least, indiscreet in a Minister unprepared to withstand the conduct he condemned.

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doubts, decided that it could not embark on war without the assistance of France.

French assistance might probably have been obtained in the previous autumn. If Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell had been prepared to carry out the Prime Minister's rash pledges, they might have secured the great advantage of French co-operation by promising that an unheeded remonstrance would be followed by military action. But the possibility of a French alliance had been weakened by Lord Russell's refusal to give this pledge, and by the curt negative which he had returned to the Emperor's invitation to a congress. Lord Russell, indeed, in January 1864, had made a new effort to obtain the alliance which he might have secured in September 1863; but he found that, in January, the Emperor Napoleon was less inclined to war than in the previous autumn. A war with Germany, so his Minister pointed out, meant for France a war on the Rhine, and could not but fail to give rise to the unfounded and unwarrantable suspicion that the Emperor was contemplating the aggrandisement of his Empire in this direction.[1]

Lord Russell proposes a conference.

No serious objection could be raised to this reply, which was as dignified as it was wise.[2] It placed the British Government, however, in a dilemma. The Cabinet, as a whole, was determined not to go to war unless it could secure the aid of France, and Lord Palmerston, as its chief, was equally determined not to

[1] *Parl. Papers*, 1864, vol. lxiv. (No. 2), p. 131, (No. 4) pp. 536, 620; and cf. Mr. Disraeli in *Hansard*, vol. clxxvi. pp. 725, 741, 742.

[2] M. Ollivier says, probably truly: 'Napoléon III était alors fort mécontent de l'opposition brutale de Russell à son congrès, des méfiances de plus en plus blessantes de Palmerston, du refus de poursuivre, par défaut de preuves, Mazzini auteur d'un nouveau complot contre sa vie. *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. vii. p. 84. Mr. Bolton King says: 'I believe, however, that there is no evidence that Mazzini had any cognisance of the attempt which a man named Greco made at this time to assassinate Napoleon.' See *Life of Mazzini*, p. 197, and Mazzini's own statement in a letter to the *Times*, 15th of January, 1864.

purchase French aid on the only terms on which it was procurable.[1] In default of armed assistance, Lord Russell was compelled to fall back on negotiation, and to endeavour to arrange an armistice, which could give a breathing space for deliberation, and for a conference, among the European powers, at which the whole question in dispute could be discussed. Here, however, the abrupt refusal with which he had met the Emperor Napoleon's proposal for a congress in the previous autumn increased his difficulties. The French Government was naturally a little sore at its own failure, and not over-eager to enter into a conference on a subject in which its interest was small, when Lord Russell refused to discuss in congress affairs in which its interest was great. Thus Lord Russell found no warm support for the proposals which he brought forward, and the conference, only reluctantly accepted, was not able to meet before the 20th of April.

General Garibaldi's visit to London.

An event, which might almost be described as accidental, tended to increase the isolation into which this country was unfortunately drifting; for, at the very moment at which it was essential that she should draw closer to France, and arrive at some understanding with Austria, General Garibaldi landed in England. The hero of the famous expedition of 1860, and the victim of the unfortunate raid of 1863, came nominally to consult an English surgeon on the wound which he had received at Aspromonte, and from which he was still suffering; but he was welcomed with the enthusiasm which the English public is accustomed to display towards its favourite heroes. His entry into London was a triumphal procession. As a foreign historian said, he became 'the idol of the English people and the

[1] *Life of Lord Palmerston*, vol. v. p. 247. *Life of Lord J. Russell*, vol. ii. p. 402. Cf. Lord Russell's speech in *Hansard*, vol. clxxvi. p. 1166 *seq.*

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lion of English society;'[1] but the idol of the many and the lion of the few was the man whom the Emperor at Vienna could not forget and the Emperor at Paris could not forgive. England—so these men thought—was openly displaying her old sympathy with revolution, or with the man who personified revolution in their eyes. Napoleon III., especially, took so little pains to conceal his annoyance, that the British Ministry found it convenient to curtail a visit which was becoming an international difficulty, and General Garibaldi was induced to return to Caprera.[2]

Lord Clarendon's mission to Paris.

Notwithstanding the growing coldness between Paris and London, Lord Russell, on the eve of the conference, made one more effort to secure the assistance of France. He sent Lord Clarendon to Paris to ascertain the Emperor's exact views and wishes. No man could have been better fitted than Lord Clarendon for such a mission. He enjoyed both the respect and the friendship of Napoleon III. Yet his journey only gave the Emperor one more opportunity of defining his policy. In the first place, he could not submit a second time to such a rebuff as he had received from Russia; in the next place, he could not advocate, at the same moment, one policy on the Po and another on the Eider; and, as he desired to see Venetia restored to Italy, he could not consistently recommend that Holstein should be placed under Danish rule; in the third place, if he went to war, public opinion among his subjects would require that he should claim some compensation on the Rhine, and such a claim would set all Europe against him. In the Emperor's opinion, therefore, prudence imposed on him a policy of peace, and no interest which the French had in Germany or Denmark justified him in embarking on war.[3]

[1] Von Sybel, *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iii. p. 345.

[2] See on this subject, Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii. pp. 108–114.

[3] *Life of Lord John Russell*, vol. ii. p. 404.

In using such language, the Emperor avoided the errors which the British Cabinet was making. He did not make the grave mistake of encouraging a weak power by words which he had no intention of translating into action. On the contrary, he distinctly announced that the views which had induced him to do so much for Italy made him sympathise with the aspirations of Germany, and that, in any case, France had no interest in the matter which could induce her to break the peace. France, in fact, was behaving with a prudence and a moderation which might inspire an Englishman, conscious of the errors of the British Foreign Office, with envy. If, indeed, it had been possible in 1864 to lift the veil which still obscured the near future, the Emperor might have trembled at the risks which he was unconsciously running. He might in that case have seen that events on the Eider were preparing the way for the troubles of 1866 and for the disasters of 1870. The Emperor, however, could not be expected to foresee the future which one man alone in Europe, Herr von Bismarck, was anticipating and preparing for. He could not be expected to realise that he was missing the one opportunity which fate was to offer him of averting his own downfall.

Lord Palmerston's rash conduct.

And so it happened that this country gradually realised that, if Denmark was to be saved from her enemies, she must owe her deliverance to Great Britain alone; and, though Lord Palmerston had formed a low opinion of the strength of the Prussian army, he hesitated to embark on a war with the two great German powers.[1] There was apparently, therefore, nothing to

[1] *Life of Lord John Russell*, vol. ii. pp. 402, *note*, and 403. M. Ollivier says that on the eve of the conference there was a complete understanding between Napoleon III. and Herr von Bismarck (*L'Empire Libéral*, vol. vii. p. 85); but I cannot doubt that this understanding would not have prevented the Emperor from joining this country if the British Ministry had been prepared to give him its active co-operation, and to allow him the free hand which he required in Venetia and on the Rhine.

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do but to wait for the meeting of the conference, and to trust to some acceptable solution arising from its deliberations. Unfortunately, however, Lord Palmerston, after his many failures, could not persuade himself to accept the inevitable with dignity; and on the 18th of April he suggested that, if France, Russia, and Sweden should agree, the conference might be informed on its assembling that unless the German powers agreed to an immediate armistice the British fleet would proceed to the Baltic, and execute such orders as might be thought fit to give it. This rash suggestion was overruled by the Cabinet; but the decision of his colleagues did not teach Lord Palmerston prudence. News reached England that, on the 18th of April, the Prussian army had attacked Duppel, the only fortress which the Danes still held in either duchy, had defeated the garrison, and had forced it to take refuge in the island of Alsen; and this news proved too much for Lord Palmerston's patience. On the 1st of May he sent for the Austrian Ambassador and told him that if an Austrian squadron entered the Baltic it would be followed by the British fleet.[1] But this declaration only furnished him with a new proof of the weakness of his position. The Cabinet refused to support their chief.[2] Lord Palmerston had made one more unnecessary threat, and incurred one more humiliation, which he might have avoided.

The proceedings at the conference.

In the meanwhile the conference was slowly pursuing its deliberations; but from the first sitting it was a thing of nought and failure. It was said of it with some truth that 'it lasted six weeks; it wasted six weeks,'[3] for the six weeks were spent by men who intended to differ and who did not desire to agree. At the very outset of the proceedings its members dis-

[1] *Life of Lord Palmerston*, vol. ii. p. 250.
[2] *Life of Lord John Russell*, vol. ii. p. 406.
[3] Mr. Disraeli in *Hansard*, vol. clxxvi. p. 743.

covered that Herr von Beust, the representative of Germany, had not arrived; and, as the representative of Prussia refused to go on without him, and as the ambassador of Austria supported the views of his Prussian colleague, the conference was compelled to adjourn from the 20th to the 25th of April, and thus allow the combined armies another week to pursue the advantage which they had already obtained.[1] When, on the 25th, the conference was at last constituted, three sittings, protracted over a fortnight, were occupied before a short armistice of four weeks' duration was finally arranged.[2] As soon as this preliminary matter was settled, a radical difference of opinion was displayed on a cardinal point. The representative of Denmark took his stand on the treaty of London; the representative of Germany replied that Germany had never recognised the validity of this treaty.[3] But this was not the only point at which the views of the plenipotentiaries widely diverged. At an early stage of their deliberations the representatives of the chief German powers declared that the complete independence of the duchies, under a constitution common to both, formed the only possible solution of the question; and the representative of Germany added that the majority of the Diet would never consent to re-establish the union between the duchies and Denmark.[4] At a later session of the conference, when the sands in the hour glass were rapidly running down, and four precious weeks had already been wasted, the two great German powers went a step farther and demanded the complete separation of the duchies from Denmark, and their

[1] *State Papers*, vol. cliv. pp. 173, 174.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 174–183. The armistice, a little later, was reluctantly extended from four to six weeks. *Ibid.*, p. 302.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 293.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 294. Cf. Vitzthum, *St. Petersburg and London*, vol. ii. p. 290.

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reunion as a state under the sovereignty of the Duke of Augustenburg.[1]

Lord Russell proposes a compromise.

At this point, when the hopes of a settlement were every day diminishing, Lord Russell made one more effort to keep the peace. Like every arbiter since Solomon, he proposed that the living child should be divided between the two suitors. In this division, however, Lord Russell suggested that the chief part of the spoil should be assigned to the stronger claimant. All Holstein, all Lauenburg, all Schleswig south of the Schlei, was to fall to Germany. But even this partition did not satisfy the German appetite. The Austrian and Prussian plenipotentiaries, in assenting to the principle of division, insisted that the frontier must be carried farther north, and that more must be given to Germany and less reserved for Denmark.[2] Denmark, however, was still unprepared to make so great a sacrifice, and Germany was unwilling to recede from the position on which she had taken her final stand. In vain Lord Russell suggested that the comparatively small point still in dispute should be referred to some friendly power which was not represented at the congress. All the combatants refused to submit the matter to arbitration, or to bind themselves to accept the decision of the arbitrator. The conference had failed, and the war went on.[3]

[1] *State Papers*, vol. liv. p. 295.

[2] The Austrian and Prussian plenipotentiaries suggested two alternative frontiers—one running from Apenrade to Tonder, the other from Flensburg to Hoyer; but they finally adopted the first of these lines as the minimum of their demands. *Ibid.*, p. 303. Great as was the sacrifice which this frontier would have imposed on Denmark, it was smaller than the loss to which she had to submit a few weeks later on.

[3] It is perhaps worth adding that M. Ollivier deduces from the failure of the conference the futility of Napoleon III.'s proposal for a congress. 'Si une conférence entre ministres, restreinte à une affaire spéciale, n'avait pu, après plusieurs semaines de déliberation, aboutir à aucune solution, imaginez ce qui serait advenu du congrès de l'Empereur entre souverains pour traiter de la Vénétie, de la Pologne, de l'Orient.' *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. vii. p. 104.

If Lord Palmerston's Administration had been conducted with common prudence, the failure of the conference would have inspired most Englishmen with regret, but it would have spared them a sense of humiliation. The conduct of the Ministry, however, had unfortunately contrived to convert an unpalatable decision into a hostile verdict. Lord Palmerston's reckless declaration in the previous July—a declaration the more reckless because it was made at a time when his own Foreign Minister was recording his opinion that Denmark was in the wrong—had persuaded everyone at home and abroad that Denmark would not be left to carry on the struggle alone; while the negotiations which had been undertaken in the succeeding January had equally convinced everyone that the promise was unfulfilled, because England or Lord Palmerston was afraid to enter on a contest with Germany without French assistance. No doubt the attitude of his Sovereign and the views of his Cabinet partly accounted for Lord Palmerston's discomfiture; but opinion did not halt to consider the reasons which had led to the humiliation of the British Foreign Office. The people saw with shame and sorrow that the promise made by the Prime Minister of England had not been kept. They heard with equal shame and sorrow the reproach which was everywhere brought: that England was too wealthy, too prosperous, to risk the sacrifices of a great war.

The conference fails.

And unfortunately experience did not teach Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary wisdom. Though they knew, though common sense might have taught them, the only conditions on which they could secure French aid, though they knew that those conditions implied a war which would have involved an entire continent in conflagration, they decided on making one more overture to France. In June, on the eve of the break-up

The last overture to France.

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of the conference, Lord Cowley, the British Minister at Paris, saw M. Rouher, the chief of Napoleon III.'s advisers. M. Rouher's language showed how deeply the Emperor distrusted the British Ministry's resolution, and how much more perfectly than Lord Palmerston he understood the situation. M. Rouher said that the Emperor would look with favour on British interference; that, so long as such interference was confined to demonstrations at sea, he would not himself move; but that, if England sent and disembarked troops, the Emperor would be convinced that she was in earnest, and would himself take the field. M. Rouher, however, added that, should war then ensüe, the Emperor's objects would not be confined to Denmark. His first object would be the liberation of Venice; his second, some trifling modification of the frontier of France on the Rhine.[1] Such an answer was perfectly consistent with the language France had held from first to last. It ought to have been anticipated by the British Cabinet; and, as neither Lord Palmerston nor Lord Russell was prepared to enter on a campaign which would have been avowedly undertaken to reconstruct the map of Europe, the knowledge that it would be given ought to have prevented any fresh application to the Government of France. Yet unfortunately neither this knowledge nor an unfortunate experience saved the Minister from one more false step, which involved one more humiliation. Speaking in the House of Lords on the 17th of June, on the eve of the failure of the conference, Lord Russell was unwise enough to üse language which he must have known he would be unable to translate into action. 'Her Majesty's fleet,' so he thought fit to say,

[1] *Life of Lord J. Russell*, vol. ii. p. 394. M. Ollivier says that this reply was given in response to a suggestion of Lord Russell's that France and England should 'impose' an intermediate frontier on the belligerents. *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. vii. p. 98. But he does not quote any authority for this statement.

'is ready for any service which it may be called on to render.'[1] Three days later Lord Palmerston had to explain away these rash words;[2] while, a week later still, Lord Russell had himself to acknowledge that, if France went to war, she 'would expect some compensation on account of her participation in it, and that this compensation could hardly be granted without exciting general jealousy among the other nations of Europe, and thus disturbing the balance of power which now exists.'[3] A sound conclusion, but a conclusion which ought to have prevented a Minister, unprepared to embark on war alone, from making ten days before a declaration that the British fleet was prepared for any duty it might be called on to render.

The last menace of the Government.

Unable, then, to obtain the co-operation of France on its own terms, reluctant to enter on a campaign on the Emperor's terms, and shrinking from a single-handed contest with the combined forces of the two great German powers, the Ministry was compelled to allow events to take their course; but, in announcing this decision to Parliament, its spokesmen, unmindful of the discredit which they had already incurred from indulging in brave words which they could not bring themselves to translate into brave action, were unwise enough to utter one more threat. 'If Copenhagen were attacked,' so spoke Lord Russell in the House of Lords, 'Government must retain to itself a certain liberty of decision. All I can now say is that, if Government should think it necessary to come to any fresh decision, it would be our duty, if Parliament were sitting, immediately to apply to Parliament upon the subject; and, if Parliament were not sitting, then at once to call

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxxv. p. 1924. It is fair to Lord Russell to say that, in making this declaration, he disclaimed any intention of uttering a threat. But it is difficult to deduce any meaning from his language if no threat was implied.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 2033.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. clxxvi. p. 320.

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Parliament together.'[1] Lord Palmerston said the same thing in the House of Commons. 'If we had reason to expect to see at Copenhagen the horrors of a town taken by assault, I do not mean to say that the position of this country might not be a subject for reconsideration; but then I say that, if any change of policy be thought advisable, such change shall be communicated to Parliament.'[2] This new menace did not amount to much, for there was no reason to suppose that Copenhagen would be subjected to the horrors of an assault; but it exposed the man who made it to a damaging retort from Mr. Disraeli: 'I can look on this only as a continuation of those senseless and spiritless menaces which have impaired the just influence of this country in the councils of Europe, and, by impairing that influence, have diminished the most effectual means of maintaining peace.'[3]

The war goes on, and Denmark yields.

Upon the failure, therefore, of the conference, the war went on. The Danes were driven out of Alsen, Jutland was overrun, and Denmark, with no strength left to continue the struggle, and forced to apply direct to her enemies, had no alternative but to submit to the hard terms which they imposed on her. She paid for her gallant resistance by the loss of Holstein, of Schleswig, and of Lauenburg, and by contributing an indemnity towards the cost of the struggle.[4]

The mistakes of the British Ministry.

This unfortunate result could not, perhaps, have been avoided. When Herr von Bismarck had once persuaded himself that the possession of Kiel was essential for the future of Germany or of Prussia, it would have required stronger methods than Lord Russell's despatches or the protocols of the London conference to deter him from his purpose. Unless, therefore, History is

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxxvi. p. 323.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 351.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 354.
[4] De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. iv. pp. 515–517, and Ollivier, *L'Empire Libéral*, vol. vii. p. 113.

prepared to say that the spoliation of Denmark should have been resisted by the whole might of England, she is not entitled to condemn Lord Palmerston's Cabinet for suffering it to take place. Where the Cabinet was wrong was not in allowing the act to be perpetrated, but in pronouncing 'senseless and spiritless menaces' as to the consequences of its perpetration. The mistake they made throughout was not in refusing to resist the assailant, but in over and over again encouraging the assailed. They were responsible for some of the misfortunes which Denmark suffered, because they induced her to believe that she would not be left to bear the weight of the onslaught alone.

It is true, indeed, as Lord Russell pointed out,[1] that the arguments of the British press encouraged the Danes to resistance; but the heated utterances of irresponsible newspapers ought to have imposed on British statesmen greater caution in the use of their own language. It was their first duty to restrain opinion: they made the mistake of inflaming it.

In this respect Lord Palmerston was the chief offender. His declaration in July 1863, that Denmark would not be alone, was the initial and chief blunder made by the Ministry. But, from the commencement of 1864, Lord Russell must share with his chief the responsibility for uttering menaces that came to nothing. Whether Lord Palmerston originally intended to act in accordance with the spirit of his words, was perhaps unknown even to himself. He thought that bold words would probably induce Prussia and Austria to pause,

[1] Lord Russell thought that Denmark would have given way 'had not a large portion of the English press, including the *Times* and the *Morning Post*, two powerful organs of public opinion friendly to the Government, inflamed the passions of the Danes, and induced them to think that they would be defended by the arms of England against even the most moderate demands of Germany, and against the well-founded complaints of the oppressed inhabitants of Schleswig.' *Speeches and Despatches*, vol. ii. p. 239.

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and in uttering them he did not wait to consider what he should do if they were disregarded. It is possible that, if he had retained in 1864 the vigour which he had displayed ten years previously, he would have translated threat into action, and risked the calamities of a European war. The weight of eighty years, however, rendered him unequal to the responsibility of a decision opposed to the views of the majority of his colleagues and to the opinion of his Sovereign. The Cabinet, therefore, in 1864 was able to exercise a restraining influence on its chief, which it had been powerless to exert in 1859; and the Queen found herself in a position to act with an authority which, with the assistance of the Prince Consort, she had failed to establish five years before. Possibly, indeed, those who are best acquainted with the inner history of the Cabinets of the reign of Victoria may, some day or other, arrive at the conclusion that the death of the Prince Consort increased the influence of the Crown; for while he was alive her Ministers felt that the Queen had the advantage of his support, and they could address their advice through him to her; but after his death it seemed ungenerous and unchivalrous to ply a widowed lady with arguments and remonstrances which they had not hesitated to employ when the Prince was alive. It was even more difficult to do so on a German question, on which the Prince had held pronounced opinions, and in dealing with which her Majesty could shelter herself under the shadow of his authority.

These considerations, however, do not excuse Lord Palmerston. He had ample means, before he made his rash utterance in 1863, of ascertaining the strength of the Queen's position, and of considering whether he intended to resist or to yield to her opinion. In ignoring the views of his own Sovereign, he made precisely the same mistake as that which he committed in

disregarding the clear utterances of the French Emperor. From first to last Napoleon III. was perfectly frank in his declarations. He made no secret that, if he went to war, he would have to fight for other issues than those which were at stake on the banks of the Schlei; and it is amazing that either Lord Palmerston or Lord Russell should have persuaded themselves that the Emperor could be induced to resist German aggression in the North of Europe without retaliating by an attack on the Rhine or on the Adriatic.

The Conservatives attack the Ministry.

The shame which was universally felt at the conduct of the Ministry gave the Conservatives an unusual opportunity. At the very opening of the Session of 1864, Lord Derby[1] described the foreign policy of the Cabinet as 'a policy of meddle and muddle.' There was no country in whose internal affairs Lord Russell had not interfered. 'Nihil intactum reliquit, nihil tetigit quod non conturbavit.' 'Thanks to the noble Earl [and his colleagues], we have at this moment not a single friend in Europe; and this great England, which never gave a promise without the intention of performing, which never threatened without a full determination of striking, which never made a demand without being prepared to enforce it, is now in such a position that its menaces are disregarded, its magniloquent language is ridiculed, and its remonstrances are treated with contemptuous indifference.' These words gave a key-note to the criticisms which were made and reiterated during the Session, and their substance was reproduced in the votes of censure which were proposed in both Houses after the failure of the conference—that 'the course pursued by her Majesty's Government had lowered the just influence of this country in the councils of Europe, and thereby diminished the securities for peace.'[2]

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxxiii. pp. 28, 29. [2] *Ibid.*, vol. clxxvi. pp. 709, 1076.

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In the Lords—where, in consequence of Lord Derby's absence from illness, this resolution was moved by Lord Malmesbury—the Government was defeated by nine votes;[1] but, in 1864, neither Lord Palmerston nor anyone else cared very much for the opinion of the Lords. The issue, it was everywhere felt, must be decided in the Commons; and in this House the issue was ultimately determined by considerations which had nothing to do with the policy of the Ministry. For, on the Liberal side of the House, an opinion was gradually forming that it was neither the interest nor the duty of the country to embark single-handed on a war for the sake of securing an object in which it had no direct interest; and, bitterly as Lord Palmerston's own followers resented the rash threats which he had uttered, they were many of them prepared to approve the determination of the Cabinet to remain at peace. They wished, therefore, to build a bridge over which Lord Palmerston might retreat. Such a bridge was ultimately found in an amendment, which was suggested by Mr. Cobden and moved by Mr. Kinglake, the historian of the Crimean War, and which expressed the satisfaction of the House that her Majesty had been advised to abstain from armed interference. This amendment, which was adopted by 313 votes to 295,[2] saved the existence of Lord Palmerston's Administration.

A vote of censure carried in the Lords,

but is defeated in the Commons.

If Lord Palmerston's supporters hesitated to cast their votes against their veteran leader, they had no hesitation in their speeches in condemning his conduct. Mr. Cobden, for example, declared the course which the Foreign Office had taken to be deplorable.[3] Mr. Forster admitted that Ministers were deserving of blame for misleading Denmark;[4] and Mr. Bernal Osborne insisted that, however grateful the country might be for

[1] By 177 votes to 168. *Hansard*, vol. clxxvi. p. 1190.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1300.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 828.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 856.

the preservation of peace, no one could be proud of the means by which it had been attained.[1] The fact was that the men who voted in the majority were determined to maintain Lord Palmerston in power, and that many of the men who voted in the minority were not anxious to replace him with Mr. Disraeli. They may have disliked, but they felt the truth of the words which Mr. Cobden addressed to them in this very debate:[2] 'I think you are very wrong in trying to remove the noble Lord. He does your work better than Lord Derby would. He throws discredit on reform; he derides the 220 gentlemen who are prepared to vote for the ballot. He spends more money, and is far more extravagant than we would allow you to be if you were in office. Besides all this, I have always been of the impression that, after he has thoroughly demoralised his own party, he intends, when he makes his political will, to hand over office to you as his residuary legatees.' There was only one thing unjust in this sneer. The Conservatives in 1864 had no desire to succeed to the reversion of Lord Palmerston's political estate; they wished to defer the evil day when Mr. Disraeli would enter on his inheritance.

Lord Palmerston's apology.

The language of his own supporters, however, was not the only thing which must have made Lord Palmerston feel bitterly the situation to which he had brought himself. For, in the first place, as he stood up to defend himself in the hour of his trial, he could hardly have avoided contrasting his position with that which he had filled some fourteen years before. Then Lord Palmerston had been saved—as he was now again about to be saved—from the consequences of a vote in the Lords by a friendly resolution in the Commons. But in 1850, whether he was right or wrong, Lord Palmerston had at any rate acted with vigour, and had

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxxvi. p. 1200.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 837.

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risked much to maintain the honour of the British name and the rights of the British citizen. In 1864 the honour of the British name had been sullied by Lord Palmerston's idle menaces; and the House of Commons, so it was publicly declared, was assisting at the final interment of that celebrated personage, the *civis Romanus*. And, in the next place, Lord Palmerston must have bitterly resented the means of his escape, and have sorely disliked availing himself of the services of the men who supplied them; for the words of Mr. Kinglake's amendment reflected as strongly on the Minister's own policy as the resolution for which it was substituted; and, whatever satisfaction the House of Commons might feel that this country had abstained from armed interference in a quarrel with which it had no direct concern, Lord Palmerston knew that abstention was opposed to his own wishes, his own feelings, and his own judgment. It was, moreover, no secret that, if the resolution was proposed by Mr. Kinglake, it was dictated by Mr. Cobden; and, of all the leading members of the House, Mr. Cobden was the one with whom Lord Palmerston was least in sympathy. He had even persuaded himself that Mr. Cobden's conduct and language in Parliament had excited the antipathy of the vast majority of honest men.

Yet Lord Palmerston, on this memorable occasion, had one more humiliation in store for him. From the first formation of his second Ministry, he had found himself constantly opposed to Mr. Gladstone in his own Cabinet. He had disliked almost everything that Mr. Gladstone had done; he had declared, on one extraordinary occasion, that it was better to lose Mr. Gladstone than to lose his own Fortification Bill (or Portsmouth and Plymouth, as he phrased it). But in 1864 he claimed Mr. Gladstone's achievements as the chief reason why the House of Commons should not declare

its want of confidence in his Ministry. 'Between 1860 and 1864 we have reduced the taxation of the country by 12,000,000*l.* With the assistance of the honourable member for Rochdale, to whom I have repeatedly said the country is much indebted, a commercial treaty [has been] negotiated between France and England, which has wonderfully increased the mercantile relations of the two countries. . . . During our Administration the permanent national debt has been reduced by 11,000,000*l.* . . . The private income of the country has increased to such an extent that the assessment of the income tax has been augmented by 27,000,000*l.* Further, the expenditure has been diminished by 3,000,000*l.* odd. The foreign trade of the country has risen from 377,000,000*l.* in 1861 to 444,000,000*l.* in 1863. It is not necessary to go into further details, or I could show the various other improvements which have been effected in savings banks and in other matters which are deeply interesting to the working classes.'[1] A record, it will be admitted, of which any Minister might be justly proud, but a record of achievements due to Mr. Gladstone's persistence, which had prevailed over a reluctant Prime Minister.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxxvi. pp. 1283, 1284.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DEATH OF LORD PALMERSTON.

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The progress of England from 1859 to 1865.

In perusing any account of the history of England during Lord Palmerston's Administration, the reader is bewildered by the restless activity of the Foreign Office, and the torpor of domestic politics. Much mischief, he may think, might have been avoided if a little of the energy, which was devoted to interference in the affairs of other nations, had been reserved to promote a few useful reforms at home. Happily, however, for the country, while the Legislature was acquiescing in the policy of marking time which was dictated by Lord Palmerston's conservative temperament, the people outside the Legislature were carrying on the work of progress. After all, the history of a country does not consist of what Mr. Carlyle called its parliamentary tongue talk; it is the energy of a race, not the laws of its lawmakers, which promotes the common weal.

And the energy of the people was great while Lord Palmerston was Minister. During the six years comprised in his last Administration, the people of these islands added some 1,200,000 souls to their population; they sent another million to fill up the waste places on the earth's surface in America, Australasia, and elsewhere; they constructed more than 3,000 miles of additional railway; they spent more than 120,000,000*l.* in developing their railway system; they increased the capacity of their mercantile marine by more than 1,000,000 tons; they doubled the tonnage of their steam

fleet; they increased the produce of their coal mines from a little more than 70,000,000 to a little more than 100,000,000 tons of coal a year; they raised the gross value of their trade from some 330,000,000*l.* to some 490,000,000*l.* annually; they reduced the national indebtedness by some 18,000,000*l.*, and they added by their thrift more than 100,000,000*l.* a year to the capital of the country.[1]

The increased use of machinery.

These examples, which could be easily multiplied, are sufficient to show that, while statesmen were slumbering and doing nothing, the people were awake and doing much. And it was not only in such ways as these that the people were showing fresh signs of life. Invention was busy in endowing men with new power. A great, but pessimistic, writer has indeed recently argued that the 'imperfect' welcome accorded to mechanical invention in England forms 'one of the best instances of the decadence of English energy.'[2] But the instructed critic will hesitate to accept Mr. Pearson's conclusion. If no invention in the third quarter of the nineteenth century made the same impression on the imagination as the railway and the telegraph, inventors were busily developing the works which previous generations had originated; they were accomplishing achievements which their predecessors could not have attempted; they were introducing machinery into the affairs of domestic life.

To take some familiar instances. It was in the

[1] Mr. Gladstone, in his Budget speech of 1861, put the savings of the country at 50,000,000*l.* a year. 'Enormous as that sum is,' so he said, 'I believe it may be taken as the amount which the skill, and the capital, and the industry of England may be computed to lay by every year.' *Hansard*, vol. clxii. p. 568. But there seems little doubt that Mr. Gladstone under-estimated these savings. The *Economist* put them from 1854 to 1859 at 114,000,000*l.* a year, and in 1860 at 130,000,000*l.* In another statistical paper they were estimated at 150,000,000*l.*, and some statisticians had put them at 200,000,000*l.* *Hansard*, vol. clxxv. p. 266.

[2] Pearson, *National Life and Character*, p. 101.

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comparatively sterile period of British history, with which this book has been occupied, that the printing machine was perfected which has made the large circulation of newspapers possible. It was in the same period that machinery was introduced into agriculture, that the sewing machine became a necessity in almost every household, and that the first practical bicycles were brought into use. Perhaps it would be impossible to name three other things which have effected so great a revolution in the life of civilised man; but these three things, though they are familiar to every household, have perhaps made less impression on the imagination than the development of the steam engine and the steam vessel, or the extension of telegraphy and the introduction of the telephone. In one sense, indeed, the railway engine may seem little superior to the locomotive which was perfected by Mr. Stephenson before the passing of the first Reform Act. The Rocket could and did attain a speed which would have seemed respectable in these modern days of rapid travelling. Yet the locomotive of to-day differs from the locomotive of our ancestors as the largest racehorse differs from the smallest Shetland pony. It was a condition of the competition, in which the Rocket succeeded, that the weight of the engine, with its load of water, should not exceed six tons; 'to-day,' so wrote a competent authority in 1895, 'there are engines built weighing seventy tons.' The Rocket, at its original trial, drew thirty passengers at a speed of twenty-five to thirty miles an hour;[1] the modern locomotive is expected to be able to draw some six hundred passengers at a speed of from fifty to sixty miles an hour.

The development of the locomotive engine.

[1] See Thurston, *A History of the Steam Engine*, pp. 196, 198, 220. The Rocket actually weighed rather more than four tons. *Encyclo. Brit.*, *ad verb.* Railways. It is said that it was driven on one occasion over four miles in four and a half minutes. Thurston's *Steam Engine*, p. 199.

The modern railway engine had not been fully developed in the period of Lord Palmerston's second Ministry; but the engine of that time bore a much closer resemblance to the engine of to-day than to the old Rocket. It is certain, indeed, that, if Stephenson could have designed, he could have found no factory in the first thirty years of the nineteenth century capable of making, the modern locomotive. The tools of his day were too imperfect and too weak to produce the results with which the world has since become familiar. In 1838 there was not a forge hammer in England or Scotland powerful enough to forge the paddle shaft of the engines for the Great Britain.[1] Yet the Great Britain, probably the finest vessel which had then been designed, had only the power of 1,000 horses. It was the application of machinery to tool-making which enabled engines to be constructed with an accuracy, and of a power, which had not previously been attainable; and it was the invention of these tools by such men as Mr. Maudslay, Mr. Nasmyth, Mr. Whitworth, and others, in the first thirty years of the reign of Queen Victoria, which enabled engineers to attempt the great works which they were pushing forward in Lord Palmerston's second Ministry. 'When I first entered this city,' said Mr. Fairbairn, in his inaugural address as President of the British Association at Manchester in 1861, 'the whole of the machinery was executed by hand. There were neither planing, slotting, nor shaping machines; and, with the exception of very imperfect lathes and a few drills, the preparatory operations of construction were entirely effected by the hands of the workmen. Now everything is done by machine tools with a degree of accuracy which the unaided hand could never accomplish.'[2] The application of machinery to

The application of machinery to tool-making.

[1] Smiles, *Industrial Biography*, p. 284.

[2] See the address, and Smiles, *Industrial Biography*, p. 299.

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tool-making led directly to the perfection of the machine. It is to tool-making machines that we owe 'the means of carrying into practice the accumulated results of scientific investigation on mechanical subjects.'[1] Hence it happens that, while the engines constructed in the earlier days of railway administration were rapidly superseded, engines designed and built during Lord Palmerston's second Administration were still running and working at the close of the nineteenth century.

Mechanical invention was encouraged by the increased demand for it. Man was everywhere attempting feats which seemed harder to accomplish than any which he had previously executed. Even the dread of war, which inspired the panic of invasion, stimulated the inventors and the engineers to fresh efforts. In 1856, on the eve of the formation of Lord Palmerston's Ministry, the experience of the Crimean War had convinced the people that improvements in artillery were essential for the efficiency of the service; and Mr. Armstrong, who rose afterwards to die as Lord Armstrong, amid the honours and riches which his ingenuity had enabled him to accumulate, devised the gun which bore his name. Two or three years later Mr. (or, as he then was, Sir William) Armstrong succeeded in making a gun of still heavier calibre, which was especially designed for naval uses, and which was said to be capable of blowing 'any wooden ship out of the water.' The invention of this gun turned the attention of constructors to armouring vessels; and, though in 1860 few manufacturers would have attempted to make an iron plate half an inch thick, in 1864 it was a common thing to manufacture plates two, four, and six inches in thickness.

The battle of the ships and guns.

[1] The words are Mr. Nasmyth's, and are quoted in Smiles's *Industrial Biography*, p. 51. They especially refer to Mr. Maudslay's slide rest; but the whole passage supports the argument in the text, that the application of machinery to tool-making enabled machines to be constructed of the power and accuracy with which we are now familiar.

Each fresh victory over matter, which gave us a thicker armour for ships, set inventors, in turn, devising some new improvement for increasing the efficiency of the attack, and the battle of the ships and guns began, which was not destined to attain its Marathon in the nineteenth century. Every new invention was warmly welcomed by the public and Parliament,[1] and more attention was already bestowed on the perfecting of machinery for destroying life than on the introduction of new inventions for stimulating trade. In the great exhibition, which was held at Paris two years after Lord Palmerston's death, this fact received a fresh illustration; for—sad and solemn spectacle—war itself was included among the industries.[2]

The promotion of railways.

If inventors were busy in devising new armour and new guns, they were concurrently addressing themselves to more beneficial enterprises. Railways were being pushed forward; more costly and more difficult schemes than had previously been contemplated were being projected, and nowhere was this change more visible than in the heart of the Empire. The whole aspect of London was being altered by the schemes of railway engineers. In 1859, when Lord Palmerston's second Ministry was formed, the Thames within the limits of the metropolis had not been crossed by a single railway. The traveller, on his way to the south-east of England, had to go to a small and inconvenient station at London Bridge. The traveller to the south-west of England had to go to a still smaller and more inconvenient station at Waterloo. To reach the former, if he came from Northern London, he had to descend a steep hill and ascend another equally steep hill, the banks of the old and famous watercourse which had originally found its way to the Thames along

New railways in London.

[1] See Captain Jervis's speech. *Hansard*, vol. clxxvi. p. 2032.

[2] De la Gorce, *Histoire du Second Empire*, vol. v. p. 206.

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the valley which is now spanned by the Holborn Viaduct. To reach the latter, unless he made a wide detour, he had probably to pay toll at Waterloo Bridge.[1] Other choice he had none. Neither Victoria Station on the west, nor Charing Cross in the centre of London, nor Cannon Street on the east, existed. There was no railway bridge at Blackfriars. In other respects the traveller was hardly better off. The Great Western Railway had a small and inconvenient terminus at the western end of the existing station; the Great Eastern (or Eastern Counties Railway, as it was then called) had a still smaller and almost inaccessible station in Bishopsgate Street. Neither the Midland nor, of course, the Great Central Railway had been brought to London. The great hotels, which now stand in close proximity to these termini, and which form such remarkable features in the architecture of modern London, had not been constructed. The man who was familiar with the London of 1860 would have hardly recognised it if he had returned to it, after a forty years' absence, in 1900.

At the time, however, of Lord Palmerston's second Ministry, the period when politics were torpid, and invention and industry were active, railway projectors, railway directors, and railway engineers were busily endeavouring to lay hands on vast areas in London. Wherever a vacant space favoured the design, the railways were seeking to appropriate it. In 1863 the Great Eastern Railway proposed to acquire Finsbury

[1] Not only were there toll bars on most of the bridges (there were only three free bridges in London in 1865. *Hansard*, vol. clxxviii. p. 1053), but there were turnpike gates all round London. See on this point a short debate in Parliament in 1860. *Hansard*, vol. clviii. p. 218. Notting Hill Gate owes its name of course to the turnpike gate which stood close to the present station. '81 turnpikes and tollbars ceased on the north of London on the 1st of July, 1864; and 61 on the south side on the 31st of October, 1865.' Haydn, *Dict. of Dates, ad verb.* Tolls.

Circus; in the same year the Metropolitan District Railway wished to appropriate Sloane Square.[1] In 1864, 'one-fourth of the whole area of the City proper was scheduled for railway purposes.' Stations were in course of erection at Cannon Street, Liverpool Street, Moorgate Street, and elsewhere; the Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways were contemplating the construction of what is called the Inner Circle, and Parliament was asked to sanction the construction of 174 miles of railway and the expenditure of 44,000,000*l.* within the comparatively limited area of the metropolis alone.[2] Parliament was so impressed with the extent of these schemes, and with the absence of any well-considered plan for the development of the railway system, that it took the unusual course of appointing a joint committee of the two Houses to determine which of the numerous Bills which had been presented to it, for the promotion of metropolitan railways, should be allowed to proceed.[3]

The consequent displacement of the working classes.

But the difficulty with which the Legislature was confronted did not merely consist in the number of ill-assorted and inconsistent proposals which were placed before it. A further and much more serious question was raised by the effect which the invasion of the railways was producing on the working classes. The proposal to convert Finsbury Circus into a railway station afforded a good example of this injury. Early in the nineteenth century, when the Corporation of the City obtained power to build over some vacant fields in Finsbury, Parliament had the good sense to reserve an open space of three and a half acres for the recreation and refreshment of the neighbourhood. In the fifty years which followed this decision, its wisdom

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxix. pp. 1019, 1909-1917.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. clxxiii. pp. 279-284, 1540-1543, and 1634.

[3] For the appointment and report of the committee, *vide* the preceding references, and see the report in *Parl. Papers*, 1864, vol. xi. p. 241.

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became very plain, for a huge population grew up in the immediate neighbourhood of this open space. Within fifty yards of it was a single parish, St. Bartholomew's, Moorfields, whose population of 5,000 was crowded into 500 houses, and whose aristocracy consisted of 'families able to indulge in the luxury of two rooms.' Through this parish it was proposed to carry the railway which was to appropriate the circus. In its course it was proposed to sweep away half the houses in the parish, and very nearly half of their helpless inhabitants.[1] The wretched people whom it was thus proposed to evict from their homes, and perhaps remove permanently from the neighbourhood of their work, had no remedy. Mere weekly tenants, they had no *locus standi* before the select committees of either House of Parliament, even if they had been able to incur the vast expense which surrounded the proceedings of the Legislature on private Bills. Such was the effect of one scheme. It was said in the House of Commons in 1865 that the 'improvements which had been carried out during the [preceding] four or five years [in London], and which were in contemplation with the sanction of Parliament, had displaced, or would displace, some 50,000 persons.' The improvements contemplated in 1865 alone affected 20,000 people.[2]

A few years before, when the evil was less obvious, Lord Shaftesbury had endeavoured to deal with it by a proposal that the promoters of any scheme which displaced a proportion of the population should provide residential accommodation for the people whom they displaced, equivalent to that which they destroyed; but, on Lord Redesdale's objection, that an inflexible rule of this kind was highly inconvenient,[3] the Lords had referred the matter to a select

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxi. pp. 1060-1085.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. clxxvii. p. 930, and vol. clxxviii. p. 544.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. cxxv. p. 410.

committee. This committee recommended that a standing order should be framed, compelling the promoters of every private Bill, in which power was sought to take compulsorily thirty houses inhabited by the labouring classes, to state the number of houses which they proposed to take, the number of persons whom they proposed to displace, and the provision which they proposed to make for remedying the inconvenience which they were causing. The recommendation was adopted, and a standing order based upon it was framed; but this order, excellent in its intentions, may possibly form a conspicuous patch in the mosaic which paves another world. At any rate, it proved inoperative; and in 1861, when the railway Bills before Parliament made the matter of pressing urgency, nothing practical had ensued from it.

Lord Derby's action in 1861.

Fortunately, in 1861, attention was again called to the matter by a statesman whose position and whose attainments gave him a commanding influence among his brother peers. When the character of the fourteenth Lord Derby is sketched by a competent judge, an adverse verdict will probably be pronounced on the chief acts of his career. Few men will care to defend his secession from the Melbourne Ministry in 1834, or from the Peel Ministry in 1845, while perhaps still fewer will excuse the light-hearted manner in which he boasted publicly in 1867 that he had taken a leap in the dark, or declared privately on the same occasion that he had dished the Whigs. Yet it may be hoped that the judge who sums up against Lord Derby on these grounds will recollect the services which he rendered to his country in the early sixties; for in 1862, in placing himself at the head of the committee charged with the task of coping with famine, he showed himself keenly alive to the responsibilities of a great landlord; and in 1861, in urging protection for the helpless working classes who

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were threatened with eviction, he showed himself equally free from the prejudices of a great landlord. He persuaded the House of Lords to direct that its select committees on new railway projects affecting the metropolis should be instructed to inquire into and report upon the number of persons liable to be removed under the schemes, and whether provision had been made or was required for remedying the evils of their displacement.[1]

Two methods by which the inconvenience of displacement could be reduced had already occurred to Lord Shaftesbury and to Lord Derby, as well as to other men. One was by the provision of new houses in the immediate neighbourhood of the tenements which were destroyed; the other was by compelling the railways to run cheap trains at the lowest possible fares, both in the morning and in the evening, by which men could be easily conveyed to and from their work, from and to their homes in the suburbs. Both methods were tentatively adopted in 1861.[2] But perhaps the discussion of the question, and the growing appreciation of its importance, which the debate revealed, did more than even the action of the Legislature to produce a remedy. In the year that followed Lord Derby's action, a rich American merchant, who was conducting a profitable business in London, gave the sum of 150,000*l.* in trust for the erection of working-class dwellings in the metropolis. Soon afterwards a successful London tradesman placed himself at the head of a joint-stock company charged with the same duty. Mr. Peabody, by his example, had shown what rich men might do. Sir S. Waterlow, by his action, had shown that even comparatively poor men might

Mr. Peabody's gift, and Sir S. Waterlow's company.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxi. pp. 1694-1711. Lord Shaftesbury followed up this action by an amendment of the standing order of 1853. *Ibid.*, vol. clxii. p. 145, and Hodder's *Life of Lord Shaftesbury*, vol. iii. p. 116.

[2] See Lord Redesdale's speech, *ibid.*, p. 150.

hope to derive some profit from their philanthropy. And, though the united efforts of the Legislature, of philanthropists, and even of joint-stock enterprises, failed to settle an important question, something, at any rate, was done; some little progress was made towards its solution.

The Metropolitan Board of Works.

Perhaps, indeed, the efforts of these various persons would have proved less successful if Parliament, in 1863, had not given the Metropolitan Board of Works power to be heard against any private Bill affecting the metropolis. Such a power had already been granted to municipalities outside London. It was right that it should be extended to the statutory body which had been entrusted by the Legislature with some sort of supervision over the entire metropolis.[1]

That Board, which had only been established in 1855, 'for the better local management of the metropolis in respect of the sewerage and drainage, and the paving, cleansing, lighting, and improvement thereof,'[2] had not hitherto accomplished much to vindicate its existence. It had done little to add to either the beauty or the convenience of London; and the little it had done was subjected to some unfavourable criticism. In 1862, however, it was entrusted with a much more important task. An unusually hot summer in 1858 had concentrated attention on the state of the Thames. The river, into which the sewage of the metropolis had been poured in 1847,[3] was in a condition which was dangerous to health. At every low tide vast tracts of foreshore were left by the receding water covered with a thick coat of decomposing sewage. The smell from the river was

[1] See *Hansard*, vol. clxix. pp. 611, 722.

[2] 18 & 19 Vict., c. 120, Preamble.

[3] In 1847, an Act had been passed enforcing the conveyance of the sewage of London into the public sewers. The contents of some 30,000 cesspools were poured into the Thames; and the remedy of one evil, as so often happens in this imperfect world, produced a new one.

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The state of the Thames in 1858.

intolerable; and the smell was nowhere worse than in the neighbourhood of the magnificent palace which Sir Charles Barry had erected as the home of the Legislature. The state of the river threatened to paralyse the proceedings of Parliament, and its condition became a much more frequent subject of discussion than the conduct of a Conservative Government or the prospects of a new Reform Bill.[1] This 'noble river,' said Mr. Disraeli in Parliament, 'so long the pride and joy of Englishmen, which has hitherto been associated with the noblest feats of our commerce and the most beautiful passages of our poetry, has really become a Stygian pool, reeking with inevitable and intolerable horrors.' It was the obvious duty of authority to find a remedy for 'a state of affairs fraught with so much danger to the public health;' and, though other men had suggested that the cost of a work of such importance should be borne in equal shares by the country and the metropolis,[2] Mr. Disraeli, whose financial conceptions were in office affected by the counsel of his permanent advisers, rightly contended that it was the duty of London to cleanse its own streets and clean its own river. But this conclusion raised a great difficulty. 'With the exception of a very small portion of the metropolis, which has been under the control of an ancient and celebrated corporation,' the municipal administration of London was still in its infancy. In this 'disagreeable and difficult position' there was nothing for it but to entrust the Metropolitan Board of Works with the duty. The cost of completing the drainage of the metropolis, and of intercepting the sewage from the river, could not be placed at less than 3,000,000*l.* Mr. Disraeli proposed that the Metropolitan

[1] See, *e.g.*, *Hansard*, vol. cl. p. 2113, and vol. cli. pp. 28, 380, 421, 573.

[2] See Mr. Cox's speech and subsequent debate, *ibid.*, p. 1165.

Board should be armed with powers to carry out the work, and to raise a threepenny rate for the purpose. This rate, it was thought, would produce 140,000*l.* a year, and the Government would then guarantee the principal and interest of a loan of 3,000,000*l.*[1]

The proposed remedy.

The scheme, which Mr. Disraeli thus elaborated, raised a good deal of criticism. Some members complained, with good reason, that the estimate of the Government was notoriously inadequate, and that the expense might be raised to five, six, or even eleven millions. Others objected that there was no plan before the House, and that it was absurd, in a matter of such moment, to invest a comparatively irresponsible Board with an uncontrolled power of determining what should be done. Others again seized the opportunity to urge that the functions of the Corporation of the City should be extended to the metropolis, and that the valuable public property which the Crown held in London should bear its portion of London burdens.[2]

Notwithstanding these criticisms, the Bill made rapid progress. The intolerable stench of the river produced, among the Legislature generally, a keen desire to escape from the neighbourhood of Westminster; and, though the Bill was only introduced in the middle of July, it passed through all its stages in both Houses in a single fortnight.

It soon became evident that the scheme thus hastily adopted could not be executed for anything like the sum which Mr. Disraeli had named. The 3,000,000*l.* rapidly grew into 7,000,000*l.* It became also plain that its execution would inevitably lead to other difficulties. The roads which connected the east and west of London were already too small for the traffic. 'It took a longer time to go from London Bridge to the Great Western Railway than from London Bridge to

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cli. p. 1508.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 1521, 1523.

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Brighton.' But, if this drainage scheme were carried out in its integrity, the narrow and inconvenient thoroughfares which were alone available for the purpose would be blocked by the simultaneous construction of high-level, mid-level, and low-level sewers. The whole circulation of a great city would be suspended, its very life would be threatened by the simultaneous closing of its most important arteries.

Hence, as the days rolled on, a general impression was created that some means must be found for relieving the metropolis from the consequences of closing or blocking its chief streets. One expedient there was for averting the evil, which could not escape attention.

The Thames Embankment.

On the north bank of the Thames, between Westminster and Waterloo, the river, which here pursues a crescent-shaped course, spread over a wide area, and left at each low tide a large space of fœtid foreshore. It was obvious that, if the foreshore were reclaimed by an embankment, a large quantity of valuable land would be recovered, considerable force would be added to the scour of the river, and, if the embankment thus made were extended to Blackfriars, a new and shorter road might be constructed to the City, under which the new low-level sewer could be conveniently constructed. The idea of thus embanking the river was not new. It had originally been propounded in the seventeenth, it had frequently been suggested in the nineteenth, century.[1] But the very magnitude of the scheme had interfered with its adoption. It required such a crisis, as the projected drainage of London involved, to insure its adoption.

Face to face, however, with the difficulties connected with the construction of the low-level sewer under the Strand and Fleet Street; assured that the construction of the sewer might even affect the foundations of

[1] See *Hansard*, vol. clviii. p. 736, and vol. clxix. p. 427.

Somerset House and St. Paul's Cathedral;[1] Parliament in 1860 reviewed its original project on the invitation of Sir Joseph Paxton, the gentleman to whose suggestion the creation of the Crystal Palace, in 1851, owed its origin; and with the approval of the Government a select committee was appointed to inquire into the subject.[2] The committee recommended the execution of the work, and the Government thereupon appointed a commission to decide the particular plan which should be adopted.[3] In the various discussions on the subject, however, it was already becoming plain that, while there was a unanimous feeling that the embankment of the river should be carried out, there was a wide divergence of opinion as to how its cost should be defrayed. Country members not unnaturally argued that the cost of a work intended to improve the metropolis should be borne by the metropolis. London members, unable to answer these arguments, protested that the cost should not be thrown on the rates. Fortunately, a method was discovered for avoiding this difficulty. From 1666, possibly even from an earlier date, the City of London had enjoyed the right of levying a tax of fourpence a ton, or more accurately of fourpence a chaldron, on all sea-borne coal imported into the City; but for many years the City had also been empowered by Act of Parliament to levy further tolls of eightpence and a penny on coal, and the proceeds of these tolls were exclusively appropriated to certain works of public utility. The eightpenny and penny duties expired in 1861; and the committee recommended, and the Government proposed, that they should be continued for a further ten years, and their proceeds applied to the construction of the projected

The coal and wine duties continued.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clviii. p. 739.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 746. For report of this committee, see *Parl. Papers*, 1860, vol. xx. p. 321.

[3] *Hansard*, vol. clxii. p. 294. For the report of the commission, see *Parl. Papers*, 1861, vol. xxxi. p. 267.

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embankment. In order to remove the opposition of the City, it was suggested that the original duty of fourpence, which the Corporation claimed as a right, but which its critics denounced as an abuse, should be continued for the same time.[1]

The acceptance of this proposal brought the country a little nearer the adoption of the scheme. The commission, to which the Government had referred it, boldly suggested that no attempt should be made to preserve the wharves between Westminster and Blackfriars, but that the rights of the wharfingers should be acquired. It further proposed that a new road should be made from the termination of the embankment at Blackfriars to the heart of the City at the Mansion House.[2] The intrinsic merits of the plan were so great, that the objections, which private and interested individuals raised to it, were easily overborne.[3] The Bill for the construction of the embankment was passed; while, in the following year, after the policy of making the new street had been referred to another commission,[4] it was supplemented by a measure authorising the formation of a new street from Blackfriars to the Mansion House. The coal duties were extended for a further period of ten years, from 1871 to 1881, to pay for the cost of its construction; and the provision of these additional resources enabled the House to contemplate further improvements. As the sum which the extension of the 9*d.* duty would provide was more than that required for the purpose, the balance was reserved for the embankment of the southern shore of the Thames from Westminster to Vauxhall. The

The scheme for embanking the river adopted.

Other improvements adopted.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxii. pp. 293–314. I have not alluded in the text to the wine duty of 4*s.* per tun or ½*d.* per dozen, which was continued at the same time.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. clxv. p. 1819, and vol. clxvi. p. 698.

[3] For the Duke of Buccleuch's objections, which he ultimately withdrew, see *ibid.*, vol. clxviii. p. 647.

[4] *Parl. Papers*, 1863, vol. xxvi. p. 431.

corresponding 4*d*., allotted to the City, was ordered to be applied to the construction of a bridge over the deep valley which, descending from Holborn on the one side and Newgate Street on the other, made heavy traffic difficult at all times, and in slippery weather almost impossible.[1]

These great improvements were made at the cost of those who lived in London or its neighbourhood. During the same period the Government itself undertook the work of providing new public offices at Whitehall, and they brought forward proposals for concentrating the Law Courts near Lincoln's Inn, and for moving the Natural History Collection from Bloomsbury to South Kensington.[2]

Thus public action was seconding private effort, and doing something to improve the appearance and diminish the inconveniences of London. Costly railway termini, connected usually with gigantic hotels, were being erected or projected at Paddington, Victoria, Cannon Street, and Charing Cross. The Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railways were burrowing underground from the west to the City; and the Midland Railway was obtaining powers for carrying its line

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxix. p. 350. The Corporation of the City was very anxious to be entrusted with the formation of the new street (Queen Victoria Street, as it was ultimately called). But the proposal, which they made with this object, was rejected. *Ibid.*, vol. clxx. p. 1703. For a debate on the further extension of the coal and wine duties, *ibid.*, p. 1721.

[2] The construction of the new block of public offices, which contains the Foreign Office, the India Office, and other departments, will always be associated with Lord Palmerston's second Ministry, because he insisted on substituting Italian for Gothic architecture. The Government in 1862 suffered a defeat on the scheme for concentrating the Law Courts. *Ibid.*, vol. clxvi. p. 826; and, in the same year, their Bill for the removal of the Natural History Collection to Kensington was also rejected. *Ibid.*, p. 1932. They succeeded in carrying their proposal in 1863, but only after very sharp debates. *Vide e.g. ibid.*, vol. clxxi. p. 237; and vol. clxxii. pp. 75-135. I have not thought it necessary to refer to the later battle of the sites for the new Law Courts which raged in Parliament, in the press, and in pamphlet literature from 1865. The rival sites were Carey Street and the Thames Embankment.

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to London, and was contemplating the erection of the noble terminus which was completed in 1868. Great, however, as were the exertions which railway engineers were making to improve the internal communications of the country in a period of abnormal activity, still more was being done to promote its external trade. Steam, indeed, had done something in this direction before the days of Lord Palmerston's second Ministry; but it was precisely at this epoch that it first became plain that steam would probably drive sailing vessels from the sea. Up to this date, indeed, the sailing merchantmen continued to increase in number and capacity. They attained their greatest number in 1863: they attained their maximum tonnage in 1865.[1] In 1859, when Lord Palmerston came into office, only one ton out of every ten of the British mercantile marine was moved by steam; in 1865, when he died, two tons out of every eleven were so moved.

The application of steam to the mercantile marine.

The activity of British shipowners was probably stimulated by the outbreak of civil war in America. In consequence of the dangers, to which the shipping of the United States was exposed, there was a tendency to transfer the vessels to a British register; and, if the mercantile marine of one country suffered, that of the other gained in consequence.[2] This tendency was increased by the gradual substitution of iron for wood in shipbuilding. Though iron is heavier than wood, so much less iron than wood is necessary in shipbuilding, that 'the weight of an iron ship is only two-thirds that of a wooden ship of the same size.'[3] In the early sixties the rich mineral resources of the United States had not been developed; this country still remained the great

[1] The figures are: in 1863, 26,339 sailing vessels, measuring 4,731,000 tons; and in 1865, 26,069 vessels, measuring 4,936,000 tons.

[2] No fewer than 348 vessels, with an aggregate burden of 252,000 tons, were so transferred in 1863. *Hansard*, vol. clxxv. p. 498.

[3] Routledge, *Discoveries and Inventions of the Nineteenth Century*, p. 133.

iron-producing centre of the world; and iron ship-building naturally found its home in the islands which, amply provided by nature with the ore which was required, and with the ports and estuaries in which the vessels could be built, had already secured, through the energy of their inhabitants, the first place in the carrying trade of the world.

The introduction of the screw propeller.

A new stimulus was given to steam navigation by the universal adoption of two inventions. The screw propeller had its origin in the earlier years of the nineteenth century; and the Great Britain, which was launched in 1843, and which was probably the finest steamer built up to that time, was moved by a screw;[1] but the majority of steamers were still propelled by side, or paddle, wheels. The screw was merely regarded as a useful auxiliary to a sailing ship, and until the middle of the nineteenth century was past the paddle-wheel still held its own. The vessels of the Collins Line, the earliest of which was built in 1851, and which for a time disputed the supremacy of the Atlantic with British owners, were moved by paddles. An American writer, indeed, partly attributed the ultimate failure of the company to the 'evident and inevitable success of screw propulsion.' And it is remarkable that, in the very year in which the Collins Line launched the Atlantic, a great English company, the Peninsular and Oriental, built their first screw steamer.[2] That steamer was destined to mark a dividing line in the history of the company; for while, before 1851, the company had built nothing but paddles, from 1851 it built nothing but screw steamers for its ordinary work.[3]

The substitution of the screw for the paddle was attended with many advantages. In a large steamer

[1] See Thurston's *History of the Steam Engine*, p. 265.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 289.
[3] See a useful little guide, the *P. & O. Handbook*, p. 20.

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the screw was always buried and always at work; while, in a rough sea and a rolling vessel, one wheel of the paddle-boat was submerged too deeply, the other raised too high, to accomplish its full task. The screw moreover could be driven with lighter engines, and with a smaller quantity of coal, than the old paddles; and finally the screw was not liable to the damage which the paddles frequently sustained from floating wreckage. Thus economy, efficiency, and safety were all to some extent secured by the supersession of the paddle by the screw. Economy and efficiency were to a still greater extent attained by the introduction of compound engines, enabling the exhaust steam of a high-pressure engine to be used to drive a low-pressure condensing engine.[1] The success of the compound engine was decisively established by some experiments conducted by the Admiralty; and thenceforward it became plain that the steamer of the future must be propelled by a screw, and that the motive power must be supplied by compound engines.

The invention of compound engines.

It has been remarked with some force that these great changes temporarily arrested the development of steam navigation. 'The introduction of the rapidly revolving screw in place of the slow-moving paddle-wheel, necessitated a complete revolution in the type of steam engines, and the unavoidable changes from the heavy, long-stroked, low-speed engines previously in use, to the light engines, with small cylinders and high-piston speed, called for by the new system of propulsion, was one that necessarily occurred slowly, and was accompanied by its share of those engineering blunders and accidents that invariably take place during periods of transition.'[2] As a matter of fact, though the Peninsular and Oriental Company placed compound engines in the Mooltan in

[1] Thurston, *History of the Steam Engine*, p. 396.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 299.

1860, and in several other steamers between 1860 and 1864, experience showed that the machinery could not be relied on; and it was not till '1869 that the company succeeded in building a steamer with high and low pressure machinery which could be considered thoroughly successful.'[1] These dates, however, show how actively invention and industry were engaged in developing fresh improvements during the period which was covered by the second Ministry of Lord Palmerston.

The slow progress which had previously been made in steam navigation may be illustrated in another way. In 1843 the quickest passage from New York had been accomplished in twelve days and seven hours,[2] while in 1863 the average passage of the steamers of the Cunard Line had only been reduced to twelve days ten hours in the winter, and to ten days and six hours in the summer. Notwithstanding the vigorous competition of an American rival, assisted by lavish subsidies from Congress, British steamboat companies had done little to shorten the duration of an Atlantic voyage. The second half of the nineteenth century had made some progress before the improvements, to which reference has already been made, gradually produced the modern steamer, which robbed the Atlantic of its old terrors.[3]

The increasing size and power of steam vessels.

The extraordinary evolution of the steamship may, perhaps, be still better illustrated from the records of another company. The William Fawcett, which the Peninsular and Oriental Company regard as their first vessel, was built in 1829; she was a paddle-wheel steamer of 206 tons with the power of sixty horses.

[1] *P. & O. Handbook*, p. 21.

[2] Thurston, *History of the Steam Engine*, p. 288.

[3] *Hansard*, vol. clxix. p. 1675. According to Mr. Rhodes, the Baltic, of the Collins Line, crossed in nine days seventeen hours in July 1854. *History of the United States*, vol. iii. p. 10.

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Twenty years later, in 1849, they launched the Bombay, a paddle steamer of 1,195 tons and 450 horse-power. In 1859 they built the Yeddo, of 1,632 tons and 2,059 horse-power. In 1869 they built the Hindostan, of 3,113 tons and 3,194 horse-power. In 1879 they built the Verona, with 3,246 tons and 3,500 horse-power. It may be convenient to add that the Persia, launched in 1900, had a capacity of 8,000 tons with 11,000 indicated horse-power. But the points to be specially observed are, first, the rapid increase in the tonnage of vessels from 1829 to 1869, and, second, the still much more rapid increase in the indicated horse-power between 1849 and 1859. In 1849 men were content to move nearly three tons with the power of one horse; in 1859 they used the power of nearly four horses to move each three tons of burden. In 1849 the ordinary ocean-going steamer had not the capacity of a Channel boat; between 1859 and 1869 the traveller could probably depend on finding a vessel with a capacity of 2,000 or even 3,000 tons. The distance was still great from the Lucania, with its measurement of 12,000 tons and its indicated power of 30,000 horses; but the most difficult part of the road had already been passed.

The Great Eastern.

One man, indeed, there was who wished to traverse the intervening distance at a bound. Mr. Brunel was an engineer whose genius was at least equal to that of any of his contemporaries, but whose views were so much in advance of his age that their adoption was constantly attended with the ruin of those who supported them. Mr. Brunel had a craving to do things on a larger scale than other men. Just as he chose that his railway trains should run on a broader gauge than those of Mr. Stephenson, so he was anxious to construct a ship of dimensions which never had been contemplated. The Leviathan, indeed, was not merely to

excel all that man had previously attempted. Mr. Brunel was emulous, so it was asserted, that her capacity should exceed that which, the old Hebrew legend relates, God himself had dictated to Noah as sufficient for the ark. The Leviathan, or the Great Eastern, as it was ultimately decided to call her, was 692 feet in length, 83 feet in width, and 60 feet in depth. She had a capacity of 24,000 tons. The enormous mass was moved by engines capable of developing the power of 8,000 horses.[1]

The Great Eastern had an unfortunate history. Built before her time, she would have failed probably, in any case, to fulfil the financial expectations of her promoters; but a series of unfortunate accidents destroyed the confidence of the public in her safety. She fell into disrepute and was ultimately sold, to be broken up, for about one thirtieth part of her original cost. But, though the ship thus proved a financial failure, she rendered one service to the human race which deserves to be remembered; for, at a period when the science of ocean telegraphy was in its infancy, she succeeded in doing what other vessels had failed to accomplish. If it had not been for the Great Eastern, it is probable that a cable across the Atlantic would not have been laid in 1866. If failure in 1865 had been followed by fresh failure in 1866, it is very doubtful whether funds would have been again forthcoming for an enterprise which experience was apparently proving to be impracticable.

The Atlantic telegraph cable.

The history of the Atlantic telegraph is almost as marvellous as the history of electricity. If the one is the record of man's gradual acquaintance with, and mastery over, a power of whose nature and origin he is still

[1] Sir Wolfe Barry gives the capacity of the Great Eastern as 27,419 gross and 18,915 net tonnage. See his excellent address in 1896 to the Institution of Civil Engineers, p. 12.

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ignorant, the other is an illustration of the resolution characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon race, which by energy and resource triumphs over every obstacle. Fifty years before the first rude telegraph wire was experimentally laid between Chalk Farm and Euston, Arthur Young, on a visit to Paris, made the acquaintance of a M. Lomond, who had actually established telegraphic communication between two rooms in his own house.[1] If it took fifty years for M. Lomond's ingenious discovery to be adopted by more practical minds, it did not take another fourteen years before electric communication was established between Paris and London. In a further fifteen years it was completed between London and New York.

As early as 1840, three years after the completion of the experiment on the line at Chalk Farm, Professor Wheatstone suggested the possibility of connecting France and England by a submarine cable.[2] A proposal of Professor Faraday, seven years afterwards, to employ gutta percha, the gum of a tree just introduced from the Malay Peninsula, as an insulator, carried the proposal a step farther; and, in 1851, Mr. Brett actually succeeded in laying a cable across the Channel. The gutta percha, however, with which the copper wire was insulated, was not protected by any covering. Thus unprotected, the cable almost immediately snapped, and communication was interrupted almost as soon as

[1] It is in this passage that Arthur Young, after stating that the message was read by observing the motion of an electrometer, uses the beautiful phrase, 'He has invented an alphabet of motions.' *Tour in France*, p. 96. Arthur Young, curiously enough, goes on to say that the discovery might be used for carrying on a correspondence 'at any distance; within and without a besieged town, for instance; or for a purpose much more worthy, and a thousand times more harmless, between two lovers prohibited or prevented from any better connection.' He seems to have had no conception of the real importance of a discovery which he was able to describe fifty years before it was adopted.

[2] *See* Wunschendorff, *Traité de Télégraphie sous-marine*, p. 1. A Russian professor exploded a mine by electricity conducted by a submarine wire as early as 1807. *Ibid.*

it was completed. The failure, however, was due to a cause which could clearly be remedied. A new, and protected, cable was soon made; and before the close of 1851 electric communication was established between Paris and London. This success was soon followed by other similar achievements. Ireland and England were electrically connected in 1853; and Germany and England in 1858. Mr. Brett was already hinting that what had proved possible under the waters of a narrow channel, was practicable under the waters of a mighty ocean, and that the New World might be connected with the Old by an electric cable.

Mr. Gisborne approaches Mr. Cyrus Field.

The same idea had already occurred to some minds on the other side of the Atlantic. Early in the fifties, Mr. Gisborne, a telegraphist, had drawn attention to the fact that Newfoundland was the nearest point of land in the New World to the Old, and had argued that, if telegraphic communication were established across Newfoundland and under the Gulf of St. Lawrence, news, brought by steamer to St. John's, could be communicated to New York two days, at least, more quickly than had hitherto been possible. Mr. Gisborne, early in 1854, endeavoured to interest Mr. Cyrus Field, an American capitalist, in his proposal, and Mr. Field was struck with the idea that the scheme was capable of expansion by carrying the telegraph from Newfoundland to Ireland under the Atlantic Ocean.[1]

For the work, to which he thus set his hand, Mr. Field succeeded in obtaining assistance both in the United States and in this country.[2] The Government

[1] Field's *Story of the Atlantic Telegraph*, p. 16. Any readers who require more detailed knowledge should consult Wunschendorff, *Traité de Télégraphie sous-marine*, pp. 1–50.

[2] The company succeeded in obtaining the concession of a monopoly from the Government of Newfoundland, as well as of extensive grants of land on either side of the line, as it traversed the colony. The impolicy of these concessions was debated in 1858 in the House of Lords. See *Hansard*, vol. cxlix. pp. 1575–1583.

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of each country undertook an independent survey of the Atlantic, and succeeded in ascertaining that a broad and comparatively flat plateau extended along the bottom of the ocean from the neighbourhood of Ireland on the east to the neighbourhood of Newfoundland on the west. Nature, which, in other parts of the world, had broken up the surface with deep valleys and high mountain ranges, had herself provided a convenient floor on which the cable might securely lie. But the procuring this encouraging information was not the chief advantage which the projectors derived from the Governments of the United States and of the United Kingdom. They placed the cost of the cable at 350,000*l.*; and the British Government undertook to guarantee a payment of 14,000*l.* a year, or 4 per cent. on the capital, as the fixed remuneration for Government messages, from the time of the completion of the line and so long as it should continue in working order.[1] After considerable hesitation the Government of the United States succeeded in persuading Congress to give the project an equally liberal support.[2]

The capital conditionally guaranteed by the United States and the United Kingdom.

There was one other step in which the two Governments lent material aid to the enterprise. The British Government undertook at the outset 'favourably to consider any request that may be made to furnish aid by their vessels in laying down the cable.'[3] Congress in this, too, reluctantly followed the example of Great Britain; and thus it happened that, in 1857, when everything was ready for the attempt, the Niagara, the most powerful steamer in the American navy, and the Agamemnon, which had borne Lord Lyons's flag before Sebastopol, were delegated each to ship one half of the

[1] *The Story of the Atlantic Telegraph*, p. 82. The subsidy was to be reduced on the net profits of the company rising to 6 per cent.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 91–111.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 82.

cable, and to proceed together on the task of laying it under the waters of the ocean.[1]

The attempt of 1857

The expedition of 1857 was not destined to succeed. After 350 miles had been laid, a heavy strain, increased by the movement of the ship, caused the cable to break; and the promoters were compelled to postpone till 1858 the work which it had been hoped to accomplish in 1857. The same ships, the Niagara and the Agamemnon, were again entrusted with the task in 1858. Instead, however, of commencing in Ireland, it was determined that the two vessels, with their attendant consorts, should proceed, at once, to the middle of the Atlantic and, joining the cable in mid-ocean, start in opposite directions to their respective destinations. But the new attempt was succeeded by a new failure. After a little more than 200 miles had been laid, the cable again broke; and the ships bore up to their appointed meeting place at Queenstown.[2] The hearts of those who were bent on the work, however, were not cast down by this fresh disappointment. Sufficient cable was still available to justify the renewal of the attempt. Before the summer of 1858 was concluded, the two vessels again proceeded to mid-ocean, again they joined the cable, and again parted to their respective goals. On the 5th of August, 1858, the Niagara landed her end of the cable on the shore at St. John's; on the same day the Agamemnon carried her end of the cable to the shore at Valentia.[3]

is renewed in 1858.

Rejoicings over its success.

When the news was told in the New World, 'America went wild with excitement and joy. Cyrus W. Field was the hero of the time. . . . While the enterprise was largely backed with English money, its conception and its execution, in spite of so many obstacles, was due to an American.' On the British side

[1] *Story of the Atlantic Telegraph*, pp. 113, 115. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 161, 165.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 174, 187.

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of the Atlantic, the news was received with less enthusiasm. Men, who were conscious of the importance of the achievement, who could record their opinion that 'more [had been] done for the consolidation of our Empire than the wisdom of our statesmen, the liberality of our Legislature, or the loyalty of our colonists could ever have effected,'[1] abstained from the extravagant outburst with which it had been greeted by the American press and the American people. Perhaps it was as well that they did so; for, though the cable had been successfully laid, from the very first it showed symptoms of defective circulation. The electric current throbbed through the two thousand miles of wire; but its pulse was the fickle and feeble pulse of decay. At last, on the 1st of September, the day which New York had set apart to do honour to the achievement and its author, the cable gave its last faint throb, and sank into the silence of the grave.[2]

The cable becomes dumb.

A nation, which had gone mad with excitement, was not prepared for so great a reverse. The American people were as unjust in their disappointment, as they had been enthusiastic in their joy. They declared that the whole thing was a fraud; they refused to believe that the cable had ever spoken; and the doubt was so widespread that the historian of the enterprise, writing a quarter of a century afterwards, thought it necessary to devote sixteen pages of his narrative to prove that, in one or two instances at any rate, a message had been actually conveyed by electricity across the Atlantic.[3]

Happily the man whose mind had originated, and whose energy had promoted, the undertaking, did not despair. The experience which he had gained, instead of impressing him with its impracticability, convinced

[1] *Times*, 6th of August, 1858. p. 212.
[2] *Story of the Atlantic Telegraph*, [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 213–228.

him of the possibility of the enterprise. He again turned, both to his countrymen at home and to his kinsfolk in England, for the funds which were necessary for a fresh attempt. From his own countrymen, he received rounds of applause; 'but not a man subscribed a dollar.'[1] In this country happily he was rewarded with more success. Messrs. Glass, Elliot & Co., who were about to consolidate the Gutta Percha Company and their own business into the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company, undertook to subscribe liberally to the capital of the new company. Capitalists like Mr. Brassey and Mr. Pender responded with equal liberality. The new construction company, of which Mr. Pender became chairman, and Mr. Glass managing director, ultimately decided on subscribing more than one-half the capital required. As a general rule, perhaps, there is no subject which the historian should so studiously avoid as the operations of stockbrokers, or the manœuvres to which the projectors of public companies resort. They may occasionally add to a nation's wealth; they unfortunately rarely add to a nation's credit. But there are happily some redeeming exceptions, where the speculations of individuals are directed to secure some great public end of national or international importance. Such, in a superlative degree, was the case of the men who, in the hour of doubt and difficulty, opened their purses to support a project which had three times failed. These men staked fame and fortune on an enterprise whose success has knit together the great Anglo-Saxon races of the Old and of the New World; and these men deserve that their memory should be recorded in the pages of history.

Means for a new attempt procured in London.

[1] The expression is Mr. Field's, in reference to a meeting at Boston. In New York a small sum was subscribed, the result of persevering personal solicitation. *Ibid.*, pp. 238, 239.

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Apathy in the United States on the subject of submarine telegraphy.

If the Americans, on their part, showed less eagerness to support a project commended to them by one of their own countrymen, it must be recollected that the circumstances of the hour were calculated to distract attention from great industrial undertakings in the United States. For the eight years, which elapsed from the failure of the cable of 1858 to the laying of the cable of 1866, comprised that eventful period in which the American people were either preparing for, or engaged in, the greatest struggle of modern times. A nation locked in such a contest had other thoughts to occupy it than its connection with the Old World. The trend of events, moreover, unfortunately did not make the American people anxious for more intimate communication with Great Britain. 'Peace on earth, goodwill towards men,' was the first message which the cable of 1858 had carried to the New World; and the hopes of the angels' song had again been shattered. Peace! The greatest war of modern times was raging. Goodwill! Men's hearts were angered on one side of the Atlantic by the depredations of the Alabama; they were vexing themselves, on the other side, with the thousand and one grievances which every great war inflicts on neutral nations.

If civil war in America diverted attention from the fortunes of the cable, public opinion in England was by no means unanimous in thinking that it was the business of the State to support commercial undertakings of this character. It so happened, indeed, that Parliament in 1861 was much more anxious about the liability which it had incurred in connection with another submarine cable, than about the future of Atlantic telegraphy. For the Conservative Government of 1858, rightly convinced by the Indian Mutiny of the necessity for telegraphic communication with India, had undertaken to guarantee 4½ per cent. interest on the capital

of 800,000*l.* estimated to be required for the undertaking on the sole condition that the line should be made and maintained in working order for a month.[1] As a matter of fact, the line, like the Atlantic cable, broke down soon after its completion; and doubts arose whether the conditions, on which the guarantee had been granted, had been fulfilled. The Government in 1861, though it doubted the propriety of the bargain which its predecessors had made, thought that good faith required its confirmation, and a measure was passed through Parliament with this object. But the new failure filled men's minds with doubt as to the future of submarine telegraphy. Lord Stanley of Alderley actually declared in the House of Lords that 'there was very little probability of cables laid in deep water being capable of working successfully for any length of time;'[2] and the Ministry, though it still continued its support to Mr. Field, and undertook to increase its subsidy from 14,000*l.* to 20,000*l.*, attached to all its offers the indispensable condition that the cable should work.[3]

Doubts in England.

The doubts or hesitations, which many people felt as to the ultimate success of the Atlantic cable, postponed for some years the renewal of the attempts which had been made in 1857 and 1858; and it was not till 1865 that everything was ready for a fresh endeavour. Full advantage had been taken in the interval of the experience which had been gained by previous failures. A committee, composed of men of great scientific knowledge, specially appointed in 1859 by the Board

The Great Eastern purchased by the promoters.

[1] The line went from Suez *via* Suakin to Aden, and thence to Kurrachee. Wunschendorff, *Traité de Télégraphie sous-marine*, p. 24. See also on this line the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Cable Communications. *Parl. Papers*, 1902, Appendix F.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. clx. p. 1252.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. clxi. pp. 283, 431, 542, 1792, 2152. *Story of the Atlantic Telegraph*, p. 231. I have had also the advantage of seeing a memo. prepared by Sir Henry [Lord] Thring on the Bill of 1861. The Government in 1862 supported a measure authorising another company to raise and work the abandoned cable. See, *inter alia*, *Hansard*, vol. clxvii. p. 397.

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of Trade to investigate the question of submarine telegraphy, had selected a particular type of cable of great strength, which they thought probably adapted for the purpose;[1] and the promoters of the undertaking, conscious of the necessity of obtaining the utmost possible accommodation on board the vessel entrusted with the task, decided on purchasing the Great Eastern, which was on sale. The failure of the great ship from a commercial point of view made her available for the purpose. Her proprietors were only too glad to sell her for the moderate sum which the promoters of the new cable were prepared to give for her.

The attempt of 1865.

Thus, in the summer of 1865, one more attempt was made to carry out the mighty enterprise. On the 23rd of July, the Great Eastern, having already joined the heavy shore end of the cable with the lighter cable which she had herself on board, set out on her journey westward. After laying some seventy-five miles of cable, the tests, which the electricians on board intermittently applied, proved that some fault, which interfered with the due flow of the electric current, was situated some ten miles from the ship in the submerged cable. It was decided to cut the cable and haul it on board till the part was reached at which the fault was situated. The operation, conducted in water some 400 or 500 fathoms deep, was successfully performed. The fault, occasioned by a small piece of copper wire, driven through the outer covering to the core, was detected and remedied; and the ship, after a day and a half's delay, resumed her voyage. For four days no further misadventure marred the progress of the work; but on Saturday, the 29th of July, the tests again indicated a new, and more serious, fault than that which had previously been detected. The situation, too, was more grave; for the ship, in her progress westward, had naturally reached the deep

[1] *Story of the Atlantic Telegraph*, pp. 231, 249.

waters of the Atlantic, and the fault lay buried under some two miles of superincumbent sea. Again, however, the engineers and the appliances at their command proved equal to the emergency. The damaged cable was slowly raised from the bottom of the ocean. The recovered portion was coiled on the deck of the steamer, and the fault was again detected. This time, too, it was found due to the same cause. A small piece of wire had been driven through the covering to the core. The men engaged on the work, struck by the coincidence, declared that these faults could not have occurred through accident, but that they were due to design.[1] It is not perhaps necessary, after the lapse of years, to accept this conclusion. But it is well to remember that the men on board the Great Eastern resumed their anxious toil with a new cause for anxiety. To the many difficulties which they had to encounter, they could now add the suspicion of a new risk—that some traitor had enlisted in their own company. Yet as hour succeeded hour, and day succeeded day, this fear began to disappear. But the hopes of the projectors were again doomed to disappointment; for, on Wednesday, the 2nd of August, when the 'Great Eastern' had performed two-thirds of her task, and was approaching the shallower water on the Atlantic coast, a new fault was suddenly revealed. The cable, chafed possibly by the roll of the ship in a rising sea, snapped as it was being hauled on board for the purpose of repairing the flaw which had been detected in it. All the skill of the engineers, all the appliances at their disposal, failed to raise it from the deep waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Three times, indeed, they succeeded in grasping the lost cable, and in raising it for some hundreds of fathoms from the bottom; but, on each occasion, the rope which they had on board for the purpose proved too

The failure of 1865.

[1] *Story of the Atlantic Telegraph*, p. 280.

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weak to bear the heavy strain to which it was subjected; it parted, and the cable again fell to the bottom of the sea.

A new failure might have dissuaded many men from continuing the enterprise: it only stimulated the projectors of the undertaking to fresh exertions. It was decided, in 1866, to make one more attempt to lay a fresh cable, and to endeavour subsequently to recover and repair the cable which had been lost in 1865. A new company—the Anglo-American Telegraph Company[1]—was formed for the purpose. Men of large capital, whose names were well known in the commercial and financial world, came liberally forward in its support. By their help more than one-third of the whole sum required was obtained before the prospectus was issued to the public; and at last, in July 1866, the efforts of the men who had refused to acknowledge defeat, and who had persevered through difficulty and disaster, were rewarded by the successful completion of the great work, to which—it is hardly too much to say—some of them had devoted their fortunes and their lives.

The cable laid in 1866.

While these men were fighting in the cause of progress and peace, events of a very different character were taking place in Continental Europe; for these were the days of stress and storm, when Prussia was boldly bidding for supremacy in Germany. The cable brought to those on board the Great Eastern the daily record of the uniform success of the Prussian arms; and the same hour, which brought them the congratulations of the British press on the completion of their great work, announced to them the conclusion of peace between the two chief combatants.[2] There is

[1] *Story of the Atlantic Telegraph*, p. 300; and cf. throughout Wunschendorff, *Traité de Télégraphie sous-marine*, p. 44.

[2] Field's *Story of the Atlantic Telegraph*, p. 339. After laying the cable of 1866, the Great Eastern recovered the cable of 1865. I have not alluded to this feat in my text, though in some respects it was a still more striking instance of skill and perseverance than the laying of the new cable.

perhaps no necessity to contrast the consequences of this great struggle with those of the more peaceful achievement recorded in the preceding pages. The former introduced the world to a new power of great strength, destined in the near future to be acknowledged as the possessor of the most formidable military machine that the world had ever seen; the latter drew more closely together two nations of common origin, of common language, and common institutions, on whose friendship—which seemed in 1865 unlikely to endure—the future of the world may probably depend.

The completion of the Atlantic telegraph impresses the imagination in a manner which perhaps works of even greater difficulty have not succeeded in doing. But the reader should not forget that the laying of the Atlantic cable was much more than a successful engineering feat. It marked the passage from a period of attempt to a period of victory. It was no longer doubtful that a cable could be constructed which could be laid and maintained under the deepest ocean. There was no limit, thenceforth, to the development of electric communication, and in the next few years cables were constructed and multiplied till the whole world was girdled with electric power. In the years in which this success was being slowly accomplished, another achievement of perhaps equal benefit to the human race was being effected in a wholly different field. The introduction of anæsthetics into surgery, dentistry, and obstetric medicine had done much to diminish the load of pain which is the unhappy heritage of the human race. In surgery especially the patient was not merely relieved from the pain, but from the shock which suffering occasioned, and the anguish which the mind endured in anticipation of the trial. The use of anæsthetics, however, did not remove one of the most serious causes of danger. It was found by experience

The introduction of anæsthetics.

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that in cases, such as compound fractures, in which the skin was injured, or in amputations, when it was cut, the process of healing was frequently retarded by the inflammation and suppuration of the wound; that the patient died, not from the effects of the operation, but from the indirect consequences of it; and it was inferred that the pus or matter from the wound was absorbed in the blood, producing what medical men termed pyæmia, or septicæmia.[1] An observation of these conditions had already induced Dr. John Syme to pay great attention to the cleansing of wounds. A younger man, Mr. (afterwards Lord) Lister, who became his son-in-law, was encouraged probably by his father-in-law's example to investigate the subject.[2] He concluded that the suppuration or putrefaction of the wound was due to the presence of microbes, and he was induced to consider whether the application of some substance which would kill the microbes would not remove this serious source of danger. He had heard that carbolic acid—one of the numerous constituents of coal tar, a substance which had been first described only in 1834—had a remarkable effect in deodorising sewage; and he assumed that it might prove equally efficacious as an antiseptic, or protection against the suppuration or putrefaction of wounds. The treatment, like most innovations, was at first rejected by the surgeons and physicians who had been trained in a previous school, but its success soon commended it to the profession and to the public; and, in a few years from its first introduction, it was generally recognised that Lord Lister's discovery had

[1] Pyæmia, or the presence of πῦον (matter) in the blood (αἷμα). Septicæmia: σῆψις, putrefaction; αἷμα, blood.

[2] I have not thought it necessary in writing a history of England to refer to the debt which Lord Lister owed to M. Pasteur's previous investigations. This is fully acknowledged by Lord Lister himself in his address to the British Association in 1896, which I have largely followed; cf. some excellent articles on surgery and antiseptics in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th edition.

done more for the human family than anything which had been accomplished in medicine or surgery since the discovery of vaccination.

Law reforms.

The idea of an 'antiseptic' treatment of septic conditions was first announced in 1860, at the very opening of the second Administration of Lord Palmerston. If we turn from mechanical improvements and medical advance to the field of jurisprudence, we shall find similar activity in progress; attended, however, with a much smaller measure of success. On the formation of Lord Palmerston's Administration, the Chancellorship was conferred on Lord Campbell, the Chief Justice of England; the Attorney-Generalship on Sir Richard Bethell, who had been made Solicitor-General in 1853. On Lord Campbell's death in 1861, Sir Richard was promoted to the woolsack and the peerage. Men might form, men probably will form, different opinions on Sir R. Bethell's conduct and character. No competent judge will question the superiority of his intellect. Sir Richard, in marked contrast to the majority of his colleagues in the Ministry, was determined to distinguish his tenure of office by large measures of law reform. With this object, and with the Lord Chancellor's assistance, he succeeded, at the outset, in obtaining the appointment of a committee of the Cabinet, instructed, with the law officers and an eminent civil servant, to consider such difficult questions as the consolidation of the statute law, the registration of titles, the reform of bankruptcy, and other kindred matters; and in 1860 measures were actually introduced for the 'fusion of law and equity,' and for the reform of the bankruptcy code.[1] The first of these measures was abandoned, and another thirteen years were destined to pass before the object at which it aimed was attained in a somewhat different way.[2]

[1] *Life of Lord Westbury*, vol. i. pp. 278–283.

[2] For this Bill see *Hansard*, vol. clviii. p. 1; for its abandon-

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Bankruptcy.

The second of them failed in 1860, but was accepted, after it had been largely amended, in 1861. In some respects, it was a useful measure. It did away with the illogical distinction between bankruptcy and insolvency; by compulsorily declaring prisoners for debt bankrupt, it cleared out the debtors' prisons. On the other hand, it increased the number of bankrupts, and did nothing to diminish the cost of bankruptcy proceedings. Sir R. Bethell and his friends contended that the defects in the working of the Act were due to the amendments which had been introduced into it in the House of Lords, and especially to the omission of the clauses which had provided for the appointment of a chief judge in bankruptcy and for the substitution of official for traders' assignees. However that may be, years were destined to pass before the bankruptcy laws were placed on a more intelligible basis. Years may still roll by before they finally assume a shape which may commend them to the community.[1]

The transfer of real estate.

In 1862, Sir R. Bethell, who, in the preceding year, had become Lord Chancellor and Lord Westbury, introduced another measure of law reform, which he hoped would simplify and facilitate the transfer of real property. In this Act, he instituted a registry of titles; and he assumed, and even boasted, that, when a title was once placed on the register, land would be bought, sold, mortgaged, or transferred 'as quickly and cheaply as an amount of stock of equal value.'[2] But the Bill, as a matter of fact, proved an almost ludicrous failure.

ment, *Life of Lord Westbury*, vol. i. p. 302. I belive that I am right in saying that the ultimate fusion was rather a fusion of courts and procedure, than the removal of the distinction between legal and equitable estate. See *A Century of Law Reform*, pp. 196, 318, 319.

[1] For the Bankruptcy Bill of 1860, *Hansard*, vol. clvii. p. 649; for that of 1861, *ibid.*, vol. clxi. p. 285. See especially the Attorney-General's speech, p. 686. For the defects of the Act, see a debate in 1864, *ibid.*, vol. clxxiv. p. 680; and cf. *Life of Lord Westbury*, vol. i. p. 303, and vol. ii. pp. 4–11.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 20.

The landlords of the country showed no disposition to avail themselves of the provisions of the Act. In addition, the solicitors, who were paid in proportion to the amount of the work which they did, and who had consequently a direct interest in keeping titles complicated and difficult, used their influence to frustrate the new law.[1] In consequence, some 500 titles only were registered during the first five years in which the Act was in force. The experience of later years was even more disappointing; and, in 1868, a royal commission was appointed to investigate the causes which had led to the failure of the Act.[2]

The consolidation of the statutes.

Some better results ensued from the steps which were taken during Lord Palmerston's Ministry to consolidate the statute law. In 1860, the statute law of the kingdom was contained in some forty volumes, each consisting of some 1,000 pages, comprising some 40,000 or 50,000 statutes; and it was estimated that if the law were embodied in a code, the whole of it might be printed in three or four volumes, and divided into 200 or 300 statutes. Such simplicity was perhaps unattainable under a parliamentary Government; but, from the date of the Chancellorship of Lord Brougham, commissions were frequently appointed to consider the best means of consolidating the law. As a result of their continuous labours, the criminal law was consolidated in 1860; but nothing was done to consolidate or codify the remainder of the law. Experience, indeed, seemed to show that the efforts of reformers had been on too ambitious a scale to command success, and that the first steps towards progress should be effected by expunging from the Statute-book repealed and obsolete statutes. Accordingly, two gentlemen of

[1] See Lord Westbury's speech, *Hansard*, vol. clxxiv. p. 1410; for the failure of the Act, *ibid.*, p. 1405.

[2] For the Bill, see *Hansard*, vol. clxv. p. 351; cf. *Life of Lord Westbury*, vol. ii. pp. 16–23; and *A Century of Law Reform*, p. 326.

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ability and experience were instructed to prepare an index to the statutes, showing which had expired, which had been repealed and become obsolete, and which were still in force. In 1863 this work was so far advanced that Lord Westbury, as Chancellor, was able to introduce a Bill for the repeal of enactments which had ceased to be in force or had become unnecessary. The Bill, followed in later years by many others of a similar nature, paved the way for the publication of that revised edition of the statutes which is familiar to every student of the laws of England.[1] The reform which was thus accomplished is a good illustration of the manner in which parliamentary institutions work in this country. No effort was made to codify the law, to amend its enactments, or to improve its language. All that was done was to reject the obsolete and useless lumber of the Statute-book. This process has been valuable enough to those whose calling compels them to have the statutes of the British Parliament on their bookshelves; but statesmen, at any rate, should recollect that the work merely supplied the means to an end, and that the intermediate step will lose half its value if it is not followed by further action.

Imprisonment for debt.

It was the desire of the Lord Chancellor to follow up this legislation with a measure, which he introduced in 1864, giving the county courts an equity, as well as a common law, jurisdiction; requiring that debts under 20*l.* should be sued for within a year from the time when the last item in the account was contracted for, or the last payment made; and limiting the system of imprisonment for debt which had gradually grown up under the jurisdiction of the county courts.[2] These three pro-

[1] For a 'History of Statute Law Revision,' see *Hansard*, vol. clxv. p. 1526; for Lord Westbury's Bill, *ibid.*, vol. clxxi. p. 775.

[2] Lord Westbury proposed to retain imprisonment in the case of fraud, &c., but in these cases to limit the duration of the punishment, and to subject the prisoner to the ordinary rules of the gaol.

visions were intended to operate in favour of the poorer classes. The first of them enabled the heirs of a poor man, who had inherited a small estate, to carry their doubts for solution to the cheap county court, instead of to the costly Court of Chancery; the second of them made it impossible for a creditor to keep a debt hanging over a poor man for a protracted period; the third of them, on which much controversy arose, and on which the measure was ultimately wrecked, deserves longer notice.

In theory, the Legislature, for many years, had been discouraging imprisonment for debt; but, in practice, some 18,000 persons had been actually committed to prison in 1862 and 1863 for debts amounting in the aggregate to only a little over 60,000*l.* The easy remedy, which had been given to the creditor under the county court jurisdiction, had extended credit; and county court judges were in the habit of punishing by imprisonment poor debtors who disregarded the orders of the courts to pay their debts. In addition, an Act of 1846[1] had authorised the committal to prison of any debtor who had contracted a debt without a reasonable expectation of being able to pay it. A poor man out of employment, and unable to find work, was supposed, if he obtained the merest necessaries of life, to fall within this provision; and thousands of poor men were annually imprisoned under it. The cruelty to these poor debtors—if the term may be applied to men whose liabilities only amounted to a few shillings—was not the only evil which resulted from this law. It imposed on the community the burden of maintaining in gaol the men from whose industry, if they had been free, it would have directly profited. It confused, moreover, misfortune with crime, sending out the debtor from prison demoralised and degraded, his chance of obtain-

[1] 9 & 10 Vict., c. 95, sect. 99.

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ing work decreased by the taint which his imprisonment had involved.[1]

The equity jurisdiction of county courts.

The Bill, however, did not succeed. The county court judges themselves, with that tenacious conservatism which is characteristic of the judicial office, were almost unanimous in objecting to the abolition of imprisonment. Lord Brougham gave them the support of his high authority; and, though the Bill was read a second time, its author saw the hopelessness of passing it, and withdrew it.[2] In 1865 he succeeded in passing a more limited measure, giving county courts jurisdiction in equity cases.[3]

It was not possible to allege that the performance of the Lord Chancellor had been equal to his promises. He had attempted much, but he had effected comparatively little. Some of his measures had been defeated, and others of them had hardly fulfilled their author's intentions. Regarded as a whole, however, they constituted an earnest attempt to simplify, to consolidate, and to improve the law, and furnish perhaps the chief claim which Lord Westbury has on the gratitude of posterity. The good, however, that a man does is often 'interred in his grave,' while the evil which he is supposed to have done 'lives after him,' and possibly, in accordance with Shakespeare's dictum, men may recollect the circumstance which drove Lord Westbury from office, and forget the efforts which he made in the cause of judicial reform.

Mr. Leonard Edmunds.

In 1865, Mr. Leonard Edmunds held the offices of Clerk of the Patents and Clerk to the Commissioners of Patents, and of Reading Clerk and Clerk of Committees in the House of Lords. Complaints were made of Mr. Edmunds's conduct in his administration of the Patents

[1] See Lord Westbury's speech, *Hansard*, vol. clxxv. p. 85.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 566, 1916.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. clxxvii. p. 486. This Bill of 1865 became the 28 & 29 Vict., c. 99.

offices, and, at his own wish, the Lord Chancellor appointed two barristers of position and character[1] to inquire into it. Their report declared that Mr. Edmunds had been guilty of the misappropriation of public money, and recommended his removal; but, on Mr. Edmunds undertaking to surrender his office, and to pay into the Treasury the amount of his defalcations,[2] he was permitted—and it is fair to say that the Master of the Rolls concurred in this decision—to resign.[3]

It was evidently impossible to allow an officer, guilty of a serious misappropriation of public money, to retain an important office at the table of the House of Lords; and the Cabinet, whom the Lord Chancellor consulted, thought it necessary that the facts should be formally communicated to the House. Before the Lord Chancellor had done so, however, he received Mr. Edmunds's resignation of his Reading Clerkship, and he seems to have persuaded himself that the voluntary resignation of the officer justified his own silence, and that there was even no reason why Mr. Edmunds's misconduct in one position should deprive him of the reward to which his good conduct in another position entitled him. Accordingly he communicated to his brother peers Mr. Edmunds's petition for a pension, without breathing a single word to arouse their suspicions. The committee to which the petition was referred, without taking any trouble to ascertain the facts, awarded their old officer the full pension to which he was entitled; and Lord Palmerston, at Lord Westbury's request, appointed Lord Westbury's younger

[1] Mr. Greenwood, the Solicitor to the Treasury, and Mr. Hindmarch. *Hansard*, vol. clxxvii. p. 1204.

[2] Mr. Edmunds paid into the Treasury 7,872*l.*, which was supposed at the time to be the amount due; but it was ultimately discovered that the whole of the defalcations amounted to 17,000*l.* See *Ann. Reg.*, 1865, Hist., p. 134; and cf. *Hansard*, vol. clxxvii. p. 1206.

[3] The law officers had reported that, as the information had been obtained on Mr. Edmunds's own confession, there was no case for a prosecution. *Ibid.*, p. 1208.

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son to the office of Clerk of the Patents, which Mr. Edmunds's resignation had vacated. The same gentleman had also the good fortune to be selected by the Lord Chancellor himself for the vacant office of Reading Clerkship in the House of Lords.[1]

Rumour, in the meanwhile, was busy with Mr. Edmunds's name. The public outside Parliament were inquiring whether it was true that he had been guilty of gross misconduct in one office; and, if so, why he had been rewarded by a pension for his services in another. Comparatively early in the Session, inquiries on the subject were addressed to the Attorney-General by Lord Stanley; and, in the desultory conversation which at that time sometimes followed questions and answers in the House of Commons, the opinion was expressed that the Lord Chancellor's selection of his own son as Mr. Edmunds's successor made the question additionally grave.[2] On the following day the Lord Chancellor himself explained his share of the proceedings in the House of Lords, and moved for a select committee to inquire into all the circumstances.[3] The committee, after a very careful inquiry, declared the charges against Mr. Edmunds fully proved; and by a narrow majority they proceeded to state that they could not agree with the view which the Lord Chancellor had taken of his public duty. In their opinion it was incumbent on him, in presenting Mr. Edmunds's petition for a pension, to have taken care that the committee, to which the petition was referred, should have the whole circumstances before it. They added, indeed, that they had no reason to believe that the Lord Chancellor's silence had been due to any unworthy or unbecoming motive;[4] but, even qualified in this way,

[1] Cf. the Lord Chancellor, *Hansard*, vol. clxxvii. p. 1209; and Mr. Ward Hunt, *ibid.*, vol. clxxx. p. 1070.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. clxxvii. pp. 1120–1123.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 1203.

[4] See *Ann. Reg.*, 1865, Hist., p. 138; and cf. *Life of Lord Westbury*, vol. ii. p. 122.

the report was a severe censure on a great officer of State. Lord Westbury, however, with the sanction of his colleagues, submitted in silence to its reproach;[1] and the House, on the motion of Lord Granville, cancelled the pension which it had awarded to Mr. Edmunds.[2]

Mr. Welch.

A few days after these proceedings were concluded by the formal rescinding of Mr. Edmunds's pension, the public were excited by the news of a fresh scandal, in which the Lord Chancellor's name was again involved. The Lord Chancellor's eldest son, Mr. Richard Bethell, happened to enjoy the acquaintance of Mr. Welch, a member of the northern circuit, a gentleman who had apparently been in the habit of accommodating persons of influence with loans of money. Mr. Bethell's circumstances were in a condition of embarrassment; and Mr. Welch undertook to lend Mr. Bethell a sum of 500*l.*—a loan, which was eventually increased—on the understanding that, in the event of his obtaining some suitable employment, the bill, given in acknowledgment, should be destroyed.[3]

It so happened that Mr. Wilde, the Registrar of the Leeds Bankruptcy Court, was charged in 1864 with irregularities in his accounts and in his conduct, which made his retention in office very undesirable. Mr. Wilde, on a medical certificate of failing eyesight, was suffered to retire on a pension of 666*l.* a year; an office was thereby placed at the disposal of the Lord Chancellor, who, on Mr. Bethell's strong recommendation, conferred it on Mr. Welch. The Chancellor, however, had not merely a registrarship at Leeds to give away; he had also a registrarship in London, which had been vacated by his younger son on his accepting the office

[1] He had constantly pressed his resignation on Lord Palmerston. See *Hansard*, vol. clxxx. pp. 1174, 1175.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. clxxix. p. 40.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. clxxx. p. 1049.

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of Reading Clerk. Mr. Miller, the Chief Registrar in Bankruptcy, suggested that the London office should be conferred on Mr. Richard Bethell. Even Lord Westbury, however, shrank from appointing an elder son, who had a little before left the country to avoid his creditors, to an office in bankruptcy which his younger son had vacated, and Mr. Miller then suggested that Mr. Welch might be brought from Leeds to London, and that Mr. Bethell might be sent to Leeds. The Chancellor promised to consider the suggestion, if Mr. Bethell could obtain a release from his creditors.

The Lord Chancellor's intimation to that effect led to some very prompt proceedings. Mr. Welch, who happened to be in London, called on Mr. Bethell, and it was finally arranged that Mr. Welch should be transferred to London, and that Mr. Bethell should go to Leeds. As a matter of fact, Mr. Bethell went down to Leeds and announced his approaching appointment. In the meanwhile, however, the Lord Chancellor received further information respecting his son's affairs, which made him refuse to carry out the projected arrangement. Mr. Welch remained at Leeds; and Mr. Bethell was arrested for debt at Ascot.

The first public reference to these grave matters was made in the House of Commons, while the public were still discussing Mr. Edmunds's pension. The Government, in saying what they could for the Lord Chancellor, declared that he courted full investigation into his conduct, and offered to consent to the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the circumstances. The Session was approaching its close before the committee reported. But time still remained to consider thereport; and the House of Commons, by a small majority, adopted a resolution proposed by Mr. Bouverie, declaring that the Lord Chancellor had shown 'a laxity of practice and a want of caution . . .

in sanctioning the grant of retiring pensions to public officers against whom grave charges were pending, which are calculated to discredit the administration of his great office,'[1] and Lord Westbury thereupon resigned the Chancellorship.[2]

Lord Westbury resigns.

So grave a scandal has happily rarely discredited the high office of Lord Chancellor. It is necessary to retrace the course of British history for 140 years[3] to find an instance of a Lord Chancellor retiring from his high office in circumstances comparable with those which led to Lord Westbury's resignation. It is necessary to retrace the course of British history for fifty-six years to find a precedent for Mr. Bethell's pecuniary transactions with Mr. Welch.[4] The misconduct of Mrs. Clarke, indeed, was not brought home to the Duke of York in 1809; just as the misconduct of Mr. Bethell was not brought home to Lord Westbury in 1865. But just as, in 1809, the disclosure of Mrs. Clarke's transactions made it impossible for the Duke of York to retain the chief command of the army, so, in 1865, Mr. Bethell's pecuniary arrangements made it impossible for Lord Westbury to retain the Chancellorship. It is true that the Commons committee had exonerated Lord Westbury 'from all charge except that of haste and want of caution in granting a pension to Mr. Wilde,' just as the Lords committee had declared that Lord Westbury's improper silence had not been due to unworthy motives. But everyone felt that, however

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxxx. p. 1135. As a matter of fact, the division was technically taken on a motion for the adjournment of the debate; but Lord Palmerston accepted the decision 'as an expression of the feeling of the House upon the original question before it.'

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 1142, 1174. For the report see *Parl. Papers*, Session 1865. There is a good extract in *Ann. Reg.*, 1865, Hist., pp. 133-149; and cf. *Life of Lord Westbury*, vol. ii. p. 124 *seq.*

[3] For Lord Macclesfield's case in 1725, see Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. iv. p. 536.

[4] For the Duke of York's case the author ventures to refer to the *Life of Spencer Perceval*, vol. i p. 305 *seq.*

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innocent the Lord Chancellor may have been, he could not properly remain in high judicial office.[1] Perhaps even his not unnatural desire to forward the interests of his own children told strongly against him. However right it may be for a Christian to carry out the Apostle's precept, public men should hesitate to promote their sons to offices hastily vacated in accordance with arrangements made by themselves. Public men, moreover, had better abstain from promoting those of their sons who are not in a position to satisfy the just claims of their creditors.

Mr. Stansfeld compelled to resign.

Grave and unusual as these proceedings were, it is remarkable that Lord Westbury was not the only member of Lord Palmerston's second Administration who was forced to resign his office through the action of the House of Commons. Two other members of the Administration, Mr. Lowe and Mr. Stansfeld, experienced a similar fate. The latter's fall was due to an act of indiscretion. He had permitted M. Mazzini to have letters addressed to him under an assumed name to Mr. Stansfeld's London house. The fact was disclosed on the trial in Paris of a man named Greco for conspiracy to assassinate the Emperor; and it was at once felt that, whatever Mr. Stansfeld's relations with M. Mazzini might have been, it was a grave misfortune that it should have been possible to make such a charge in France against a member of the British Government. Lord Palmerston, indeed, generously refused to allow Mr. Stansfeld to resign;[2] but he was only able to ward off a vote of censure on the 17th of March by a narrow majority of ten votes.[3] So meagre a victory invited a renewal of the attack; and Mr. Stansfeld, convinced that his presence in the Ministry was becoming a source

[1] The Chancellor himself said, 'People now spell embezzlement, embethelment.' *Life of Lord Sherbrooke*, vol. ii. p. 238.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. clxxiv. p. 324.

[3] By 171 votes to 161. *Ibid.*, p. 284.

of embarrassment to his colleagues, insisted on resigning the minor office which he held at the Admiralty.[1] Mr. Lowe occupied a very different position from that which was filled by Mr. Stansfeld. He was far the ablest of the band of Ministers who had not yet attained Cabinet rank; and, though he had hardly acquired the high repute which he gained by his speeches in 1867, he already stood a head and shoulders above the rest of his colleagues outside the Cabinet. Selected, on the formation of Lord Palmerston's Ministry, to fill the office of Vice-President of the Council, he was, to all intents and purposes, the Minister of Education; and his whole temperament induced him to signalise his tenure of office by bold legislation; for though, on organic questions, Mr. Lowe was to make his mark by his opposition to change, on all other subjects he was the constant advocate of reform. There was no abuse which he was not ready to remove, no monopoly which he was not anxious to destroy, except the abuse of the rotten borough, and the monopoly of the ten-pound householder.

Mr. Lowe and the Revised Code.

Reform was certainly necessary in our educational system in 1860, but there was no general agreement as to the principles on which reform should be based. Some there were who were simply actuated by a desire to teach every poor child to read, to write, and to do a few simple sums in arithmetic; and who thought that any further instruction—in religion, for example—might safely be left to the parents of the children. Others there were, on the contrary, who thought that education was worse than useless if it were not based on religion, and who were much more anxious to teach the

Educational reform.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxxiv. p. 396. Sybel, in his *Founding of the German Empire*, vol. iii. p. 344, writes of Mr. Stansfeld as 'one of England's highest Government officials, the Lord of the Admiralty, Stansfeld.' It is, perhaps, hardly reasonable to expect that a foreign historian should understand that the Civil Lord of the Admiralty occupies one of the lowest places in the British political hierarchy.

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children the Church Catechism than the rule of three. But, though these contrary opinions were held on the subject, there was a general agreement that education could not be sufficiently extended without adequate funds. Even the Church found it hard to raise money for the support of its schools, and outside the Church there was even greater difficulty in doing so. In consequence, the friends of education, whether they stood outside or inside the Establishment, were slowly gravitating to the conclusion that no real progress would be made until the voluntary contributions of the wealthy could be supplemented by some compulsory rate. A committee, which had its head quarters at Manchester, proposed 'to engraft a system of local rating upon the existing organisation.'[1] In 1853, Lord Aberdeen's Ministry adopted a portion of this scheme. They introduced, through Lord John Russell, a measure empowering the councils of corporate towns with a population of 5,000 to levy a rate to be applied to supplementing the income of existing schools by paying the fees therein. The Bill failed. It was, in fact, bound to fail; for it was already felt that, if the ratepayers were to be rated for the support of these schools, they must be given some voice in the management.[2] In fact, another association, the National Public School Association, was already advocating a larger scheme. The members of it desired to establish local boards, empowered to raise local rates for the establishment of schools, which were to stand side by side with the denominational schools.[3] But the House of Commons

[1] Sir H. Craik, *The State and Education*, p. 43. I am much indebted to this excellent little book for these prefatory observations.

[2] For Lord John Russell's Bill of 1853, see *Hansard*, vol. cxxv. p. 522. I have allowed the sentences in the text, written before 1902, to stand; for I believe that I am right in stating that the Parliament of 1859 would have had no hesitation in rejecting any scheme, placing a rate-supported school under private management.

[3] Sir H. Craik, *The State and Education*, p. 42.

was no more prepared to establish school boards than to endow voluntary schools with public money. The one measure fell because it was in advance of public opinion; the other failed from the general dislike to increase the power of the Church by what was practically an endowment of denominational schools.

In the meanwhile the modest grant of 20,000*l.*, which the Whig Government of 1833 had obtained for the promotion of education,[1] had rapidly grown. It had risen to 50,000*l.* in 1843, and to 260,000*l.* in 1853. In that year the Government decided to supplement the assistance which had been already given, by the payment to the managers of schools, under a certificated teacher, of a capitation grant for each child who had given a certain number of attendances in the year. This measure materially raised the cost of education to the State, and it reached 836,000*l.*[2] in 1859, the year of the formation of Lord Palmerston's second Ministry. It is remarkable that this rapid growth of expenditure was the effect not of legislation but of departmental minutes. Even the introduction of the capitation grant in 1853, and its extension in 1856, were effected without legislation. Sir H. Craik says: 'The Legislature at the most acquiesced in the minutes: it did not deliberately ratify them.'[3] But it should be recollected that the expenditure was directly sanctioned by the House of Commons in votes of supply, and by both Houses in the Appropriation Act. Constant complaints, however, were made in Parliament of the rapid growth of this expenditure. It was asserted on one side that the education which was given at many schools was too high, and that the schools, with the assistance of the

[1] *History of England*, vol. iv. p. 183.

[2] See Mr. Dillwyn's speech in *Hansard*, vol. clxiv. p. 295. The estimate of 836,000*l.* included a provision for the deficiencies of the three preceding years. See *ibid.*, p. 720.

[3] See *The State and Education*, pp. 39 and 40; and cf. pp. 45, 46.

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State, were competing unfairly with private enterprise: it was complained on the other side that the education in many schools was defective, and that no provision was made for the education of the poorest children, whose parents could not afford the fees which the managers of denominational schools were in the habit of charging. So gross was the ignorance of the poorer classes, that the chaplain of a gaol in the north of England declared that 40 per cent. of the prisoners sent to his prison were ignorant of the name of Jesus Christ, and that 60 or 70 per cent. were ignorant of the name of Queen Victoria.[1] Stirred by these facts, a Conservative member of Parliament, in the beginning of 1858, who had already obtained a reputation as an educational reformer, moved for a commission to inquire into the state of popular education in England, and whether the present system is, or is not, sufficient; and to consider and report what changes are necessary for the extension of sound and cheap elementary education among all classes of the people. The motion, though introduced by Sir John Pakington, who had held Cabinet rank in Lord Derby's first Ministry, and seconded by Lord Stanley, who was shortly to succeed to high office in his father's second Administration, found its chief opponents on the Conservative benches.

The Royal Commission of 1858.

At the suggestion of the Government, however, it was modified by omitting the words referring to the sufficiency or insufficiency of the existing system; and with this alteration the motion was carried by a considerable majority.[2]

Lord Palmerston's first Administration fell in the fortnight which followed the division on this motion; but its fall did not interfere with the appointment of the commission. The new Cabinet, indeed, contained

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cxlviii. p. 1184.
[2] By 110 votes to 49. *Ibid.*, p. 1248.

its chief advocate, Sir J. Pakington, and its chief opponent, Mr. Henley. But Lord Salisbury, who became President of the Council, and whose memory is perhaps forgotten in the reputation of his more brilliant son, decided on consulting neither of his two colleagues who had taken so active a part in the debate, and on constituting the commission on his own responsibility. He placed in the chair of it the Duke of Newcastle, who held no extreme views on either side of the question, and who brought a free and unprejudiced mind to the duty.[1] The commission, which made elaborate inquiries throughout the country, did not finally report till 1861. It to some extent confirmed, though in other respects it contradicted, the allegations which had been made by Sir John Pakington; for it showed that, if the educational progress of the country were measured by the number of children at school, considerable advance had been made. In the earliest report on the subject, made in 1818, one child in every seventeen of the population was said to be at school; in 1833 the proportion had risen to one in eleven; the commission found that it had since increased to one in seven or eight.[2] These figures, which would hardly be accepted as adequate in the present day, 'when it is the rule to expect one in every six of the population to be at school,'[3] pointed, in 1861, to a considerable improvement. It was the quality, and not the quantity, of the education which the commission condemned. It considered that it was, at once, too ambitious and too superficial, that the younger children were neglected for the sake of their older schoolfellows, and that not one child in four was properly taught.[4] The commission also reported that, though 2,500,000 children were at

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxiv. p. 702.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 703; Report of the Commission, *Parl. Papers*, 1861, vol. xxi.; and cf. *History of England*, vol. i. p. 186.

[3] Sir H. Craik, *The State and Education*, p. 49.

[4] *Hansard*, vol. clxiv. p. 722.

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school, one-third of the whole number were in private adventure schools of whose efficiency there was no proof, and whose inefficiency was in many cases notorious, while another third were in schools receiving no grant from the State, and in consequence undergoing no inspection.[1] Defective as the system was, moreover, the cost to the State was steadily increasing, and seemed likely, if it continued to grow at the existing rate, to exceed 2,000,000*l.*

The remedy for this state of things the commission found rather in the extension than in the amendment of the existing system. Voluntary effort was to be encouraged to continue the exertions which it was already making; and voluntary effort was to be supplemented by external assistance. The commissioners, indeed, rejected the idea of a parochial rate, but they thought that a county rate, and in the larger boroughs a borough rate, might be levied, and that its proceeds might be assigned 'to schools which satisfied certain conditions and proved a certain attainment on the part of their scholars.'[2]

The recommendations of the commission were necessarily considered by Mr. Lowe, who, as Vice-President of the Council,[3] was really Minister for Education. Mr. Lowe's biographer, indeed, is at pains to show that Mr. Lowe, as a merely subordinate member of the Government, was not answerable for its educational policy; and no doubt Lord Granville, as President of the Council,[4] was the Minister technically responsible both to the Crown and Parliament. But it is certain

[1] *The State and Education*, p. 50. The commissioners said, that of the children not at school (one-third of the whole number), two-thirds were at work, and one-third idle. See p. 88 of Report. One-ninth, therefore, of the children of school age, were neither at school nor at work.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 64. The reader may care to refer to what so competent an authority as Mr. Matthew Arnold has to say on this commission in the reign of Queen Victoria, vol. ii. p. 257 *seq.*

[3] The Vice-Presidency of the Council was an office created only in 1856. Todd's *Parl. Government*, original edition, vol. ii. p. 689.

[4] *Life of Lord Sherbrooke*, vol. ii. p. 215.

The Revised Code.

that in fact, if not in theory, Mr. Lowe shaped the policy of the department, and was the author of the changes which he announced in 1861, and which became the subjects of keen debate in 1862. Mr. Lowe saw clearly on the one hand that the proposal of the county or borough rate, the proceeds of which were to be applied to the assistance of existing denominational schools, was neither satisfactory nor equitable. It could not be satisfactory to relieve the taxpayer at the cost of the ratepayer, and the commissioners' recommendations would obviously have this result; it could not be equitable to throw a new charge on the ratepayers without giving them a voice in the management of the schools which they were called on to assist. Mr. Lowe, therefore, came to the conclusion that the true alternative lay between the establishment of rate-supported schools, managed by representatives of the ratepayers, and the development of the existing system of voluntary effort promoted by Government subventions. He chose the latter course; indeed, in 1861 any other choice was hardly practicable; determining, however, to modify the conditions on which Government assistance was granted, in the hope that more stringent regulations might improve the quality of the education afforded. A capitation grant had been introduced in 1853, and extended in 1856, under which the managers of each school had been given a certain sum for each child who attended, for a certain number of days, a school under the charge of a certificated teacher, three-fourths of whose children were present at the inspection. It was this grant which Mr. Lowe used for the purpose of giving effect to his policy. He proposed that the grant should only be given in the case of schools which were certified fit, and which were under the charge of a certificated master; that the amount of the grant should be calculated on the attendance of the child, but that

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its payment should depend on the child passing a satisfactory examination, to be regulated by its age, in reading, writing, and arithmetic; and that one-third of it should be deducted for the child's failure to pass in any one of these subjects. Mr. Lowe hoped by these conditions 'to secure efficient education in return for State assistance. As he cynically said himself, 'If the new system is costly, it shall at least be efficient; if it is inefficient, it shall be cheap.'[1]

The system, which Mr. Lowe thus foreshadowed on the 11th of July, 1861, was embodied in a minute of the 29th of July, published only on the very eve of the prorogation. Parliament, therefore, had no opportunity of considering its terms during the Session of 1861. But the public out of doors, at any rate, were not debarred from discussing them. Religious bodies had already been alarmed at the terms of the Duke of Newcastle's report. They found fault with it, indeed, not for what it said or did, but for what it left unsaid or undone. In fact, it had recommended the extension of the voluntary system; in words, it had treated education as a secular and not a religious business; and Mr. Lowe in his speech had committed precisely the same offence. While declaring that 'it [was] not the intention of Government to infringe on the organic principles of the [existing] system, namely, its denominational character, its foundation on a broad religious basis, its teaching religion, and the practice of giving grants from the central office in aid of local subscriptions,'[2] he had stipulated that the grant should be dependent not on the child's religious or even on its moral conduct, but on its ability to read, write, and cipher. In their inmost hearts the country clergymen, who to their great

[1] Each child was to be capable of earning for its school 1*d.* for each attendance after the first 100 attendances. See Mr. Lowe's speech, *Hansard*, vol. clxiv. p. 720, and *The State and Education*, p. 73.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. clxiv. p. 725.

credit had been far the most liberal supporters of schools,[1] cared nothing for these accomplishments, but cared much for the religious training of the child; and the Vice-President of the Council was assessing religious education at *nil*, and secular education in reading, writing, and arithmetic at a sum already amounting to many hundreds of thousands of pounds, and likely in the immediate future to run into millions.

Debates in Parliament on the Code.

The promulgation of the new scheme, therefore, produced 'perturbation and dismay.' Deputations to remonstrate with the Minister became the order of the day. 'Here they come, in number about five thousand,' was Mr. Lowe's own description of one of these deputations to Lord Granville. But far more serious than deputations to the Minister, or articles in the press, was the action of Parliament. At the commencement of the Session of 1862, Lord Derby claimed, and Lord Granville conceded, that Parliament should have the full right of discussing the New Code;[2] and, in accordance with this promise, Mr. Lowe in one House, and Lord Granville in the other, formally produced and explained the minutes in which the Code was comprised.[3] Even at this stage, the Government found it necessary to announce some modification in their policy. They excluded Scotland from the operation of the scheme; they exempted infants under six years of age from examination; and they made other concessions intended, to some extent, to satisfy the religious susceptibilities of the Churches, and to reduce the expenses of the managers of voluntary schools.[4] These alterations,

[1] See Sir J. Pakington's very striking statement, *Hansard*, vol. clxiv. p. 704, which Mr. Henley endeavoured, though very ineffectually, to answer. *Ibid.*, p. 714.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. clxv. pp. 38, 39.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 170, 191.

[4] The Revised Code, it should be recollected, increased the expenses of voluntary schools, by requiring proper teachers and accommodation. And the economical argument no doubt influenced the clergy. Indeed, Lord Granville told a story of a Diocesan Board which had agreed to seventeen resolutions against the Code. A Conservative member of Parliament, who was

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however, did not remove the whole of the objections to the New Code, and its opponents drew up a series of resolutions, which they asked the House of Commons to affirm, declaring, *inter aliâ*, that (1) the whole amount of the grant should not depend on the individual examination of the children; (2) the children should not be grouped for examination according to their age, but according to their position in the school; (3) in the case of children under seven the grant should not depend on an individual examination of the child; and (4) the refusal of a grant on account of a child who had previously passed the highest standard would tend to aggravate the acknowledged evil. The resolutions also condemned the treatment of evening schools as unsatisfactory, and of pupil teachers as impolitic and illiberal. The resolutions were prepared and moved by the statesman[1] who had twice held office under Lord Derby as Home Secretary, whose position as the representative of a great university enabled him to speak with authority, and whose withdrawal from the Ministry of 1858 convinced the House that his advocacy of an alternative scheme was free from any suspicion of party ties. The debate which was thus initiated was conducted with ability; and, before the House separated for the Easter recess, the Government was compelled to announce fresh concessions. The points which had been urged by the movers of the resolutions were practically conceded. It was arranged that the grant should be given partly for attendance and partly for examination, that infants under seven should not be examined at all, and that children over seven should be graduated according to their class, and not according

The Code amended and passed.

present, asked whether, if, instead of the penny, a twopenny capitation grant were conceded, these objections would be removed. The Board consulted again, and were—again unanimously—of opinion that this concession would remove all objections. *Hansard*, vol. clxv. p. 176. For the modifications, *ibid.*, p. 183.

[1] *Ibid.* vol. clxvi. p. 21.

to their age. Satisfied with these great concessions, the movers of the resolutions forbore from pressing them any further, and the Revised Code, with the important amendments thus introduced into it, came into force, and influenced the conduct of elementary education for thirty years.[1]

In the protracted controversy, which was thus terminated by an acceptable compromise, the combatants on either side had largely leaned on different authorities. Educational reformers, like Sir J. Pakington, or even Mr. Lowe himself, had almost necessarily accepted the conclusions of the Commissioners, that the education given under the existing system was both inadequate and imperfect. Staunch Conservatives, on the other hand, of whom Mr. Henley and Lord Robert Cecil were striking examples, contended that the views of the Commissioners were inconsistent with the reports of the inspectors, that the Commissioners had been misled by the reports of their assistants, and that the state of the schools was, in reality, much more satisfactory than the Commissioners alleged. Such men naturally studied with renewed interest the inspectors' reports. Many of the inspectors, however, disliked the changes which Mr. Lowe had introduced into the system which it was their business to administer, and openly and notoriously used their reports for the purpose of discrediting it. The Council Office naturally thought

The revolt of the inspectors.

[1] I trust that I may not be thought too partial to a father's memory if I add the tribute to him which Mr. Lowe had the generosity to pay. 'Before I sit down, I must turn with the greatest pleasure to the right hon. gentleman, the member for Cambridge, and beg to offer my sincere acknowledgments of the manner in which he has conducted this controversy. He has had the good fortune—which I cannot bring myself even to envy him—of having carried out substantially that which he proposed; and, having done so, in the moment of triumph and victory, he has had the wisdom and moderation to stop short, and to leave to the enemy, almost lying under foot, the remainder to which he clung, having conceded all he could. It is a rare instance of candour, moderation, and good feeling.' *Hansard*, vol. clxvi. p. 1242.

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that it was undesirable that reports, intended to supply facts, should become the vehicles for controversy; and when its officers observed passages of this kind, to which exception could be taken, it returned the reports to the inspectors and drew their attention to the regulations under which the reports were to be framed. The inspectors, some of whom were men of high attainments and great influence, resented this interference, and they found a champion in a man, Lord Robert Cecil, whose commanding abilities ultimately raised him to the highest place in the councils of his Sovereign, but who was more distinguished in 1864 for satire and sarcasm than for temper or tact. Lord R. Cecil, declaring that Mr. Lowe claimed to expunge from the reports all opinions differing from his own, asked the House to declare that this proceeding tended 'entirely to destroy' the value of these documents.[1] He was supported in his argument by Mr. Walter, the proprietor of the 'Times,' a journal to which Mr. Lowe had been a constant contributor, and by Mr. Forster, already prominent among the younger men on the Liberal side of the House, and who was the brother-in-law of Mr. Matthew Arnold, the most distinguished among the inspectors.[2] The motion was naturally resisted by Mr. Lowe, who, however, received only a feeble support from his colleagues in the Ministry, and in a thin House was carried by a small majority.[3]

Lord R. Cecil's motion.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxxiv. p. 897. Lord R. Cecil, in the course of the debate, said: 'The right honourable gentleman has spoken in bitter terms of subordinates, who communicate what they think to be abuses in their departments to members of this House. I am quite sure that the House will not endorse this censure. I do not believe that, in the service of the Crown, any loyalty is due to the heads of departments as against the House of Commons.' *Ibid.*, p. 1212. It may be wondered whether this extraordinary doctrine ever recurred to Lord Salisbury after he attained high political office. Happily for him and his contemporaries, the Civil Service of the Crown has been distinguished for quite other views than those which he thus rashly enunciated.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 902, 910.

[3] By 101 votes to 93. *Ibid.*, p. 912.

On the acceptance of this motion, Mr. Lowe at once insisted on resigning his appointment. Lord R. Cecil, by his resolution, had charged him with mutilating the reports; Mr. Lowe, in his reply, had emphatically denied that he had mutilated them; and the House, by affirming Lord R. Cecil's resolution, had practically shown that it accepted the charge, and disbelieved the denial. As a man of honour, Mr. Lowe thought that he had no alternative but to resign, and, in resigning, to invite the House to inquire fully into his conduct. In accordance with his wish, Lord Palmerston undertook to move for a select committee to ascertain whether the impressions under which the majority had voted were, or were not, well founded;[1] the committee, towards the close of the Session, agreed upon a report, which exonerated Mr. Lowe;[2] and the House, on the Prime Minister's motion, rescinded the resolution to which it had been persuaded by Lord R. Cecil to agree.[3]

Mr. Lowe's resignation.

Mr. Lowe's character had been completely absolved by the inquiry of the committee and the vote of the House. But the reversal of a hasty decision did not lead to his return to office. He remained outside the Ministry during the remainder of Lord Palmerston's life;

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxxiv. p. 1215, and vol. clxxv. p. 369. It ought, perhaps, to be added that Lord Granville resigned the Presidency of the Council at the same time that Mr. Lowe resigned the Vice-Presidency, but that he was persuaded to withdraw his resignation. *Ibid.*, vol. cxci. p. 1323.

[2] *Parl. Papers*, 1864, vol. ix. p. 13.

[3] *Hansard*, vol. clxxvi. p. 2067. I have given the barest outline of the controversy; but perhaps I ought to add in a note that Mr. Lowe stated in debate that he neither mutilated the reports by cutting out passages, or even by marking passages for the inspectors to cut out. The inspectors thereupon, or some of them, showed several members of the House in the lobby draft reports so marked. Mr. Lowe was able to show that they had been so marked by subordinates without his knowledge and against his directions; and his own weak eyesight, which forced him to have all papers read to him, had prevented him discovering this. He naturally complained of the disloyalty of his staff in showing such documents to private members of Parliament. *Hansard*, vol. clxxxiv. pp. 1207.

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and, after Lord Palmerston's death, Lord Russell was either unable or unwilling to introduce him to the Cabinet.[1] Thus one of the ablest and most restless members of the Liberal party was kept out of office. It is never wise for the historian to speculate on the what might have been; but it is perhaps not too much to say that, if Mr. Lowe had been restored to office or promoted to the Cabinet either in 1864 or in 1865, the whole history of England from 1866 downwards might have been diverted into another channel.

Other changes in the Ministry.

Few Ministers have ever sustained such severe blows as were inflicted on Lord Palmerston's Government by the causes which led to the compulsory resignation of Lord Westbury, Mr. Lowe, and Mr. Stansfeld. The Minister himself was discredited by his inability to shield his colleagues; and the Government as a whole was deprived of ability which it could not afford to spare. For it must be recollected that the resignation of these three men did not constitute the only losses which the Ministry experienced. Death was busy during the whole time of Lord Palmerston's second Ministry, and the angel of death seemed to take a special pleasure in knocking at the door of the Cabinet. The Cabinet of 1859 had originally consisted of sixteen members; five of these—nearly one man in three—died before the Parliament of 1859 had expired. A Chancellor, Lord Campbell; three Secretaries of State, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Sir George Lewis, and the Duke of Newcastle; and a Postmaster-General, who afterwards became Viceroy of India, were all removed by death. During a single Ministry and a single Parliament three men held the office of Chancellor; three men that of Secretary of State for War. The changes were almost as rapid as those which occurred many years afterwards in the Chief Secretaryship for Ireland, and which made con-

[1] *Life of Lord John Russell*, vol. ii. p. 423.

tinuity in policy and administration in that office impossible.[1]

The changes were more serious because they reduced the power of the Government in the House of Commons. When the Cabinet was formed, it consisted of six peers and ten commoners. In 1865, on the contrary, it comprised eight peers and only seven commoners. The two great spending departments, the Admiralty and the War Office, were both held by peers; and so numerous were the peers in the higher offices that, in 1864, it was noticed that all the five Under Secretaries of State were commoners. Mr. Disraeli brought this fact before the House of Commons in 1864, contending, with some force, that the arrangement was a breach of the law.[2] Mr. Lowe's resignation enabled Lord Palmerston to correct the error into which he had fallen. Mr. Bruce, one of the five Under Secretaries, was appointed Vice-President of the Council; his place at the Home Office was given to another of the Under Secretaries; and Lord Dufferin, a peer, became the fifth Under Secretary. But the Government was compelled to introduce and pass a measure indemnifying Lord Hartington, the latest of the Under Secretaries, for violating the law; and, though no one thought them guilty of anything but a mere oversight, they suffered from the

The question of an Under Secretary's seat.

[1] The Chancellors were Lord Campbell, Lord Westbury, and Lord Cranworth. The three War Ministers, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Sir George Lewis, and Lord de Grey and Ripon. A fourth War Minister, Lord Hartington, was appointed after Lord Palmerston's death. The Chief Secretaries for Ireland from 1882 to 1892 were Mr. W. E. Forster, Lord F. Cavendish, Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Sir W. Hart Dyke, Mr. W. H. Smith, Mr. John Morley, Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Mr. A. Balfour, Mr. W. Jackson, Mr. John Morley. Ten changes in ten years! Mr. Gladstone wrote in the autumn of 1865: 'Twelve Cabinet Ministers I have already reckoned in my mind, all carried off by the rude hand of death in the last five years, during which only three have been made. They are, Lord Dalhousie, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Herbert, Sir J. Graham, Lord Canning, Lord Elgin, Sir G. Lewis, Lord Campbell, Lord Macaulay, Mr. Ellice, Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Palmerston.' *Life of Gladstone*, vol. ii. p. 194.

[2] *Hansard*, vol. clxxiv. p. 1218.

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disrepute which always attaches to a mistake of such a character.[1]

Lord Palmerston's popularity.

Neither, however, the loss of colleagues, nor the committal of mistakes, affected the stability of Lord Palmerston's position. The men, who kept him in office, cared little or nothing for other members of the Government. To them Lord Palmerston was the Ministry, and the Ministry was Lord Palmerston. There was a general desire that he should remain in power for the rest of his natural life, and a general hope that his life might be protracted for as long a period as possible. Nowhere was this feeling stronger than on the Opposition benches. In the early sixties, nine Conservatives out of every ten would have thought it the gravest misfortune to replace Lord Palmerston with Mr. Disraeli. Circumstances compelled them to follow one statesman; but they disliked his character and distrusted his policy. Circumstances placed them in opposition to the other; but they approved his conduct and they liked the man.

Hence it happened that things, which would have shaken other Ministries to their foundations, had no effect on Lord Palmerston's stability. It was recollected that he had attained power by the narrowest of majorities; and it was thought natural that, in a Parliament in which parties were almost evenly divided, the Minister should be exposed on subsidiary questions to minor defeats. On the 17th of June, 1864, for example, Ministers escaped defeat on a vote of censure by only seven votes. Three days later they were beaten, on a Government measure of importance, by a majority of four; and on the following night they again found themselves in a minority of one.[2]

[1] For report of committee, *Parl. Papers*, 1864, vol. x. p. 605. The Under Secretaries Indemnity Act is the 27 & 28 Vict., c. 21.

[2] The vote of censure was on a small war in Ashantee. Sir John Hay moved a resolution to the effect that the Government, in

In fact, the peculiar conditions, on which Lord Palmerston's Ministry was founded, gave an artificial appearance to the proceedings of the House of Commons. It was virtually recognised on both sides of the House that an adverse division on any ordinary matter was not to be followed by the resignation of the Ministry, but it was also understood that an adverse division on a matter for which Lord Palmerston really cared was to be avoided at all hazards. Thus the very member, who succeeded in obtaining the reconstruction of the Revised Code in 1862, refused in the same year to press a motion for retrenchment which Lord Palmerston declared that he should regard as a vote of want of confidence. Lord Derby, so he argued, both publicly in the House of Lords, and privately among his friends, had declared that he did not wish to displace Lord Palmerston. That being so, he could not persevere with a motion which might entail consequences he was not prepared to encounter.[1] Better even extravagance with Lord Palmerston, than economy and Mr. Disraeli.

This controlling influence—this universal desire to maintain Lord Palmerston in power, which had prevailed throughout 1864, and which had even induced the House to condone the Danish policy of the Government—remained, or was exaggerated, in the calmer atmosphere of 1865. Peace was restored to Continental Europe; peace was about to be restored to the United States of America; the distress which had prevailed in the cotton districts was abated; and even Ireland,

The political calm of 1865.

sending an expedition without making adequate provision for the health of the troops, had incurred a grave responsibility, and the motion was only defeated by 233 votes to 226. *Hansard*, vol. clxxiv. p. 2023. On the 20th, the Government was defeated, on the third reading of a Bill for the better collection of taxes, by 132 votes to 128, *ibid.*, p. 2102; and the next night the House carried a motion on an Irish Court of Chancery Bill, 'That the Chairman do leave the Chair,' by 42 votes to 41. *Ibid.*, vol. clxxvi. p. 30. A division which was as unusual as it was embarrassing. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

[1] *Ibid.*, vol. clxvii. p. 386. See *supra*, p. 376.

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which had been blessed with an unusually good harvest, was experiencing more prosperity than had fallen to her lot for many years. The Ministry was thus able to frame a satisfactory speech for her Majesty to communicate to Parliament: a speech, however, which had no great measures to announce, no active policy to propose. It is just such a speech, said Lord Derby, 'as might naturally have been expected [from] an aged minister in a moribund Parliament.'[1] So serene was the atmosphere in which it was delivered, that the debate on the Address did not occupy more than forty-three pages of 'Hansard,' and neither Mr. Disraeli nor Lord Palmerston thought it necessary to intervene in it.

The calm which was observable at the commencement of the Session remained practically undisturbed till its close. The fact that Parliament had entered on the last year of its existence[2] would alone have made heroic legislation impracticable, even if Lord Palmerston's temperament had not prevented its proposal; and, as the Session wore on, men began to realise that they were on the eve, not merely of a dissolution of Parliament, but of a change in the Ministry. They could not avoid perceiving a marked change in Lord Palmerston's gait and appearance. The Minister, who had hitherto defied the advances of age, had suddenly grown old.

A knowledge of Lord Palmerston's increasing infirmities, however, hardly penetrated the electors to whom the appeal was made in July, and who felt the enthusiasm which a combination of great age and great vigour so commonly excites. The small majority of Liberals in the Parliament of 1859 was converted into a large majority in the Parliament of 1865. In every part of the United Kingdom—in the metropolis, in England, in Scotland, and in Ireland—the voice of

The general election of 1865.

[1] *Hansard*, vol. clxxvii. p. 22.

[2] The Parliament of 1859 endured longer than any Parliament had lasted since the Parliament of 1820.

the electors was pronounced in favour of the Liberal party and Lord Palmerston.

But, though Lord Palmerston's popularity affected the issue in every part of the United Kingdom, the contest which attracted most attention turned on other issues. Since 1847, Mr. Gladstone had sat for the great University of Oxford, of which he was the most distinguished graduate. His wide learning, his great abilities, his high character, his long service, and his conservative affection for the Throne and the Church, made him an almost ideal university member. But the graduates of Oxford had never regarded his connection with the University as satisfactory. His mind was too subtle to be easily understood by the ordinary country clergyman. It was enough for them that their member, while professing Conservative principles, was always associating himself with Liberal colleagues; that the man who was professing an attachment to the Church, had supported the Maynooth grant, had resisted the Ecclesiastical Titles Act, was in favour of the abolition of compulsory Church rates, and had dared to propose the taxation of charities. It was enough for them that the man who only lately had been a member of the Carlton Club, was the Minister in whom earnest Liberals put their trust, who was doing something to reconcile the Radicals themselves to Lord Palmerston's continuance in office.

Mr. Gladstone rejected at Oxford,

Attempts had been made in the past to disturb Mr. Gladstone in his seat, but these attempts had failed. The eminent members of the University who made Oxford their home were, on the whole, in favour of retaining the most illustrious of her sons as their representative. But, in 1865, the opposition to Mr. Gladstone had increased in volume, and the country clergymen, who were his most numerous opponents, had been armed with fresh powers; for, in 1861, an Act had been

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passed which enabled voters at a university to record their votes by means of voting papers;[1] and country clergymen were thus enabled to vote without the inconvenience to themselves, and the expense to their candidate, of a special journey to Oxford. They succeeded, moreover, in obtaining the services of a suitable candidate. The warmest admirer of Mr. Gathorne Hardy could not, indeed, claim for him the intellectual eminence which everyone conceded to his rival; but he had abilities of high order, a character beyond reproach, a bearing which made him popular, and a private fortune which added to his influence. Holding minor offices in the Ministry of 1858–59, he had already acquired the reputation of a sound administrator and a ready debater. He was on the eve of attaining a high political level, and, while his friends and colleagues were whittling away their old principles, or their old opinions, of reproducing the old Tory watchwords, which had been hardly heard since the days of Lord Eldon. The cynical critics, indeed, who declared that the Carlton Club contained every type of politician except the original article, forgot that there was no more constant frequenter of the Club than Mr. Gathorne Hardy.

Two kinds of men were, indeed, opposed to the struggle which the Conservatives were preparing. The man who was jealous of the reputation of the University, who thought that it derived distinction from the distinction of its member, protested against the narrow bigotry which was threatening to deprive Oxford of the services of her greatest son. The man, on the other hand, who, like Lord Palmerston, dreaded and disliked Mr. Gladstone's growing Liberalism, thought it sheer folly to remove from him the restraint which his con-

[1] The Act is the 24 & 25 Vict., cap. liii. The debates on it will be found in *Hansard*, vol. clxii. and clxiv.

nection with the University supplied. 'Keep him in Oxford, and he is partially muzzled; but send him elsewhere, and he will run wild.'[1] Neither gratitude, however, for the past, nor fears for the future, restrained the action of the country clergymen. Mr. Gladstone, at the close of the poll, found himself in a minority, and took refuge in South Lancashire. There, perhaps unconsciously using the phrase which Lord Palmerston had employed, he avowed that he came before the electors 'unmuzzled.' Keenly as he felt the separation from his old University, he could not but realise that the suffrages of a great county freed him from many of the restraints which are necessarily imposed upon the statesman who is the mouthpiece of the possibly intelligent, but certainly unprogressive, constituency which consists of the graduates of a great university.

and elected for South Lancashire.

Yet, in one sense, Mr. Gladstone could hardly be said to be the mouthpiece of South Lancashire. In 1861, an Act had been passed[2] assigning the seats originally allotted to two boroughs—St. Albans and Sudbury—which had been disfranchised for corruption, to the West Riding of Yorkshire, to South Lancashire, to Birkenhead. The Bill was subjected to a good deal of discussion in its passage through Parliament; but, after sustaining some amendment, was ultimately carried, and South Lancashire received a third member. This decision provided Mr. Gladstone with the seat of which he stood in need. He was returned for South Lancashire, but he stood only third on the poll. Two Conservatives, gentlemen of local importance, were preferred to him; the influence, which was due to his position and eloquence, only procured for him this subordinate position.

[1] *Life of Lord Shaftesbury*, vol. iii. p. 188; Russell's *W. E. Gladstone*, p. 168.

[2] 24 & 25 Vict., cap. cxii. *Hansard*, vol. clxi. p. 448; and cf. vol. clxiv. p. 118.

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Mr. Gladstone's position, however, at the close of the election was a matter of comparatively little importance. What really mattered was, that the restraints which his connection with the University had imposed on him, had been determined by his defeat; and that the necessities and disabilities of a great manufacturing population had been brought home to him by his victory. The best and ablest of men are insensibly affected by the conditions in which they live, and the atmosphere by which they are surrounded. The bark which carried Mr. Gladstone's fortunes had been slowly beating against the head winds of Oxford: it ran before the breeze which Lancashire had given it.

The death of Lord Palmerston.

And the occasion was as striking as either the victory or the defeat; for Mr. Gladstone, who had hitherto held only a lieutenant's commission, was on the eve of promotion to a far higher position. Lord Palmerston died on the 18th of October,[1] 'full of days, riches, and honour,' and Mr. Gladstone succeeded to the leadership of the House of Commons.

His character.

It is hardly necessary in this chapter to trace, at any great length, the character of the statesman who has occupied so prominent a position in the pages of the present volume. His fame must rest on what he did and on what he said; and the criticism of later men will do comparatively little to determine his position in history. But perhaps it may be permissible to point out that Lord Palmerston enjoys one advantage over all his greater contemporaries. However much the critics may disapprove his policy, they cannot avoid being attracted to the man; for Lord Palmerston was probably the best type, which public life has afforded, of the best class which this country has produced. He was emphatically a gentleman, and he never condescended to sully his hands with a mean or paltry

[1] *Life of Palmerston*, vol. v. p. 273.

policy. He was also emphatically an Englishman; a man who was animated by a genuine love for his own country, an unswerving faith in his own race, and an unfailing belief in its destiny.

It was said of one of Lord Palmerston's predecessors that he was a very good man of a very bad sort. It might have been said with equal truth of Lord Palmerston that he was a very good type of a very good sort. Men pronounced Lord Melbourne indifferent, Sir Robert Peel cold, Lord John Russell uncertain, Lord Aberdeen weak, Lord Derby haughty, Mr. Gladstone subtle, Lord Beaconsfield unscrupulous. But they had no such epithet for Lord Palmerston. He was as earnest as Lord Melbourne was indifferent, as strong as Lord Aberdeen was weak, as honest as Lord Beaconsfield was unscrupulous. Sir Robert Peel repelled men by his temper; Lord John Russell by his coldness; Lord Derby offended them by his pride; Mr. Gladstone distracted them by his subtlety. But Lord Palmerston drew both friends and foes together by the warmth of his manners and the excellence of his heart. They felt that there was nothing unworthy about him; that, even in his faults, he did not transgress the code of honour among gentlemen. They knew, too, that he would fight to the finish, and that he would be ready, whether in victory or defeat, to shake hands with his adversaries after the battle.

His strong common sense made him an excellent administrator; his long experience gave him, in this respect, an advantage over all his contemporaries; and, in an age when administrative ability was not so rare a qualification as it unfortunately afterwards became, he stood on a level with the best administrators of his time. But something more than administrative ability is required of a Prime Minister; and Lord Palmerston's reputation must ultimately depend on the

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judgment which may be formed of his domestic and of his foreign policy.

So far as Lord Palmerston's domestic policy was concerned, he will chiefly be recollected as the consistent opponent of organic reform. He was, indeed, a member of the Cabinet which carried the first Reform Act; but his name is hardly associated with that great measure, and any passion which he may have felt for organic reform was exhausted on its adoption. His influence undoubtedly postponed till after his death any further instalment of parliamentary reform. His arm kept the sluices down; and, while he lived, they were strong enough to withstand the accumulating weight of the advancing waters of democracy. Yet no one ever did worse service to the cause which he endeavoured to support. The moderate measure of reform, which he might have carried in his second Administration, would have averted the revolutionary flood which swept away the old landmarks after his death. The Act of 1867 may have been as wise as the Liberal, who trusts the people, may be disposed to regard it; it may have been as unwise as the Conservative, who distrusts the people, considers it. But, wise or unwise, the Act of 1867 may be traced back to Lord Palmerston. It was his refusal to give a little, that compelled a succeeding Parliament to give much.

But it was at the Foreign Office that Lord Palmerston achieved his reputation: it is by his foreign policy that he will be judged; and, in his foreign policy, Lord Palmerston did two great things. He was the Minister who practically secured the independence of Belgium, and he was the Minister who worked with ability and success to secure the freedom and union of Italy. These were great services, which the sternest critics of Lord Palmerston's policy will not hesitate to acknowledge. In addition to these two great services,

his sympathies were always in favour of national movements and popular autonomy, and he was always as ready to recommend the enfranchisement of another people, as he was reluctant to concede the enfranchisement of his own. But, when all this has been said, there is unfortunately matter remaining for a grave indictment of Lord Palmerston's foreign policy. In Eastern Europe he had persuaded himself that British interests required that he should uphold the power of the Government which afflicts, by its rule, some of the fairest districts of the world. It was this determination which inspired the policy of 1840: a policy which brought us to the verge of war with France; which committed the country to that unhappy struggle in the Crimea which terminated forty years of European peace; and which indirectly carried our arms to Cabul, to the sacrifices and the disasters of the first Afghan war.

Nor, unfortunately, is this the only charge which can be brought against Lord Palmerston's foreign policy. He was so intent on his own objects, that he never stopped to consider the feelings of other nations. He made us the most detested nation in Europe; he left us, after his death, without a single ally. It may perhaps be thought that unpopularity was the price of greatness, and that Lord Palmerston was right to pay it; but then it is fair to reply, that Lord Palmerston did not succeed in making this country great. It may be an exaggeration to say, as Mr. Matthew Arnold said,[1] that Lord Palmerston found this country the first power in the world's estimation, and that he left it the third; but few competent critics will deny that, during all the long years of Lord Palmerston's life, Great Britain had never fallen so low as she fell, in consequence of Lord Palmerston's policy, in the year which preceded his death.

[1] Herbert Paul, *Life of M. Arnold*, p. 94.

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For it is only fair to admit that the causes which brought Denmark dismemberment, and this country humiliation, were due to faults inherent in Lord Palmerston's nature, and inseparable from his policy. He liked to hold his head high, and to use strong and even menacing language. He believed that a resolute front would, in the long run, prevail; and he did not consequently scruple to threaten when he had not made up his mind to strike. He liked to play a game of brag on the card table of Europe, and habitual success had convinced him that he was master of the game. He was fated, before his life closed, to meet a player, far stronger than himself, whom it was his misfortune to misunderstand and despise. He met Herr von Bismarck with the same easy confidence with which he had met other antagonists, and he retired from the contest a broken and a beaten man.

But though history may find much to condemn in Lord Palmerston's policy both at home and abroad; though it may say that the Conservatism of his later years was the real cause of the revolution of 1867; though it may conclude that in 1840 Lord Palmerston risked war with France for reasons which were inadequate; that in 1854 he forced on war with Russia on grounds which experience has shown to be wrong; that, in 1857, he supported an agent whom he ought to have recalled; and that in 1864 he degraded the country by his inability to redeem the pledges which he had unnecessarily given in 1863; though it may think his conduct to his Sovereign in the later forties as indefensible as his conduct to Mr. Gladstone in the earlier sixties; yet even so the verdict of history will not wholly destroy the popular impression. The people, who like the sound mind in a sound body, which was the characteristic of Lord Palmerston during the sixty years of his public life, who are not insensible to the

refreshing influence of a vigorous old age, who prefer simplicity to subtlety, and honesty to intrigue, will find themselves possibly disapproving the Minister, but attracted to the man. They will cover up his faults with his winding sheet, and remember that he lived and died an English gentleman.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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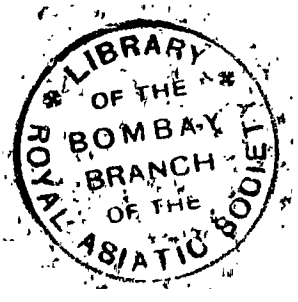
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